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HOW TO READ HISTORY

BY

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General Preface

THE object of HODDER AND STOUGHTON'S PEOPLE'S LIBRARY is to supply in brief form simply written introductions to the study of History, Literature, Biography and Science ; in some degree to satisfy that ever-increasing demand for knowledge which is one of the happiest characteristics of our time. The names of the authors of the first volumes of the Library are sufficient evidence of the fact that each subject will be dealt with authoritatively, while the authority will not be of the "dry-as-dust" order. Not only is it possible to have learning without tears, but it is also possible to make the acquiring of knowledge a thrilling and entertaining adventure. HODDER AND STOUGHTON'S PEOPLE'S LIBRARY will, it is hoped, supply this adventure.

Foreword

THIS little volume is intended to supply practical hints as to reading for the use of ordinary people who, knowing little or no history, desire to know more. It is solely with this intention in mind that the selection of books has been made. Were I advising the professional student of history, some of these books would, doubtless, be omitted as being already well known, while many others, not here mentioned, would be included.

I desire to say that only such books as I myself have found useful and interesting have been mentioned, and the fact that a book has been omitted does not necessarily imply that it is not worth reading. Only English books, and such foreign works as have been translated into English, have been included.

W. W. D.

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Introduction

MUCH has been said already, and much might yet be said, about the best method of approaching the study of the past. So vast is the subject that the inexperienced student, only too often, mistakes some by-path, in which he has become especially interested, for the great high-road, and thus loses all sense of proportion, and fails to grasp the principle of historical continuity. Specialisation has been forced upon us, however reluctant we may be, by the enormous multiplication of books, and of material of every kind. Data accumulate with stunning and astounding rapidity. Hardly a week goes by without the publication of some learned monograph, claiming to reveal new facts, and to set right the errors of previous writers. So enormous is the amount of available material that eminent scholars have been known to maintain that no man, however industrious and however capable, can possibly attain a real knowledge of more than some ten years of the world's history, or even of that of a single country. This view of the matter may be confidently rejected; for a man who knows only ten years, however thor-

oughly, would really know no more about the development of mankind than the man who should study minutely a square mile of the world's surface would know about geography. For history to become a liberal education, a study setting free the mind from the narrow and cramping trammels of the passing hour, it is essential that long periods should be taken into account. To trace the progress of the great human procession one must ascend to the hill-top; and from that point of vantage one may hope to gather some clear ideas of the nature of the road traversed, the reasons for many a halt, many a curious detour, many a sad fall, many a stirring triumph. This is necessary for the student; and it is surely no less necessary for the intelligent general reader who wishes to understand the present by investigating its roots in the past, and to learn wisdom for the future by contemplating the virtues and the vices, the successes and the failures, of his forerunners. Any scheme of reading must therefore at least cover the whole ground, and must moreover cover it in such a way that the historical continuity can clearly and easily be traced.

At the same time it must be admitted that all periods of history are not equally worthy of attention. Just as there have been great men and small men, so have there been important and unimportant epochs. For reasons which we must not here attempt to enter into there have been periods in

the past when the human spirit has shone with a dazzling lustre, casting far and wide its searching light upon the deep and eternal problems of life. In such periods as those men create things which are of priceless and abiding value to the race, whether they be fine buildings, fine books, fine music, fine thoughts, or fine deeds. The world witnessed such a period when Pericles was the most eminent of Athenian citizens, when Hadrian was Emperor of Rome, when the Medici were rulers of Florence, when Luther stood before the Diet at Worms, when William the Silent was creating the Dutch Republic, when Cromwell was organising his Ironsides, when French civilisation reached its zenith in the age of Louis XIV, when the French Revolutionists and Napoleon brought a new Europe into being, and when the mighty twin statesmen, Bismarck and Cavour, were moulding at will the destinies of that Europe which had thus been created. There are periods, such as these, which must be studied carefully, so as to drink in their very spirit. On the other hand, there are long epochs in the world's history resembling parched and barren deserts, wherein men of low ideals have toiled unworthily for unworthy ends. There has been no such thing as steady and continuous progress in the past; for even if we admit that there has been progress at all (and that is denied by some notable thinkers), it is quite evident that such progress has been erratic,

sometimes as much accomplished in a dozen years as at other times in two centuries.

We shall do well, therefore, to allow our reading to gather itself about the great epochs in the world's history, and about the lives of those men who have stamped the impress of their own individuality upon the age in which they dwelt. But while doing this the continuity must be preserved. These epochs, sometimes separated by whole generations of dull and barren history, must be linked together. It must be clearly discerned that the chain is never broken, but stretches from the earliest dawn of history down to the present day. Sometimes the connection is far from being easy to trace; nor is it always in proximity of time that the clue must be sought. It is not always the events nearest to us in strict chronological order that have had the deepest influence upon us; nor do our affinities invariably lie with our immediate ancestors. Bismarck, great statesman as he undoubtedly was, belongs rather to a mediæval than to a modern order of things. We who live after the Great War are bound to feel that Pericles, who lived between two and three thousand years ago, is much more like ourselves, and would have understood our problems and sympathised with our difficulties in a way that the famous Prussian Junker probably would not. And again, in the domain of thought, Euripides as poet, and Plotinus as philosopher, are far more closely akin

to us than are Tennyson and Hegel, not to mention Dante and the schoolmen of the Middle Ages. Our object, therefore, should be so to understand the past as to be able to perceive what contributions each age has made to the present.

It is a debatable point whether it is better to begin our study with some comprehensive book purporting to give a bird's-eye view of the whole of history, or to leave such a book unread until the great formative epochs have been studied in greater detail. On the other hand, it may be contended that if such a book be read at the beginning it is bound to lead to superficial and facile generalisation. Conclusions will, of necessity, be swallowed whole, in complete ignorance of the grounds upon which they are based. Such a process, it is said, is utterly vicious, for the reader should form his own conclusions and arrive at his own generalisations as the result of an adequate study of the data before him. For this view of the matter there is a great deal to be said. A little knowledge is liable to be a source of great danger to its possessor, and few things are so bad as the parrot-like repetition of brilliant generalisations accepted upon the sole authority of some famous writer with a gift for epigram and paradox. This is the besetting peril of evening classes in which keen and able working men, having but little leisure for reading, pin their faith to some favourite author, usually of a heterodox

complexion, without having the means at their disposal of correcting, or even realising, his defects. At the same time some sort of rough chart of the ground to be traversed seems highly desirable. Indeed, the whole dispute resembles that which takes place with regard to the proper use of a first-class guide-book to a foreign country. Some travellers maintain that to read it at home before starting on the journey is sheer waste of time, and that only on the return, when its words call up living images in the mind, can its criticisms, its descriptions, and its verdicts be intelligently appreciated. Others maintain, on the contrary, that such a book should be read beforehand, in order to inform the traveller of the wonders of Nature, and the treasures of Art, which he ought to see. To discover these things for one's self would entail a considerable loss of time. It would appear, therefore, that the sensible course would be to combine the advantages of both plans. Read a short and accurate book, covering the entire period, before entering upon a more detailed study; then at the end of the course read the same book again. The first perusal will prepare the mind of the reader for impressions to be received. The second perusal will enable him to compare his own impressions with those of another independent, and probably better qualified, student.

Before coming to the names of any specific books it would be as well, perhaps, to map out clearly

the main stages in the long journey to be travelled. These will then serve as landmarks, and around them the different ramifications and divisions of the subject can be grouped. Opinions differ widely as to the date at which the study of history should begin. Some would date it no earlier than those times when men first began to preserve some sort of record of their own doings, engraved upon tablets of stone or wax. Others would carry it back to those distant times, long before the invention of even the most rudimentary forms of writing, when men, hardly to be distinguished from the wild beasts of the forest and jungle, waged their first fierce battle with their environment, and took the first steps in the direction of civilisation. It would appear to be the wiser course to avoid these two extremes. There seems little reason for not looking at men making history, before they began to write it; for we have abundant materials for the study of those distant and most important ages, the exact dates of which we do not know, and which stretch back for tens of thousands of years until they are lost entirely to our vision. The great achievements of those times—the discovery of the use of fire, the taming of animals, the growing of crops, the making of tools, the building of houses, the organisations of the tribe and the family, and many other such things—overshadow in importance almost everything that has been done since; and to neglect them is not

merely to insult the memory of those men of old who wrought so durably and well, but also to neglect the very foundations upon which our whole material civilisation has been built. A history of tools, for example, would not be altogether a travesty of the history of man. But we must pause somewhere; and it is surely wrong to pursue under the name of history investigations into matters which more properly belong to the domains of geography, ethnology, and anthropology. Our own territory surely is sufficiently wide without trespassing upon those adjacent fields.

We should begin our reading, then, with the study of primitive man. We should trace the steps by which he raised himself from a position of abject submission to all the forces of Nature around him into one of mastery and dominion. At the close of this period we see men living in orderly communities which are gradually developing into States, and occupying principally the great fertile river valleys, such as those of the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile. The influence of rivers upon history is one of the most fascinating topics in that wide border-land where geography and history meet. Men have by now so far triumphed over Nature that they are not obliged to spend every moment of their lives in warding off enemies and in laboriously seeking their daily food. They have their crops, their flocks and their herds, and

these bring their regular increase, thus freeing their owners for the pursuit of all those things which together go to make up culture.

Then followed the ancient empires, with their interesting, unique, and highly developed civilisations—Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Chaldea, Persia, and Israel.

From these we pass to the maritime civilisation, of the Eastern and Middle Mediterranean—Phœnicia, Crete, Greece and Carthage. This period culminates in the subjugation and hellenisation of the whole civilised world east of Greece by Alexander the Great, and the division of his empire upon his death among the foremost of his captains.

Hardly is this accomplished when the little City-State of Rome begins to extend her sway. Italy is first conquered, then Carthage, Spain, the whole Western Mediterranean, Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, Asia to the Euphrates, Gaul, and all Europe to the Rhine and the Danube, including Britain.

Then follow the two important and concurrent movements—the decay of the Roman Empire, and the growth of the Christian Church, culminating in the enthronement of the Pope in the capital of the Cæsars.

We then observe the peculiar civilisation and political structure of the Middle Ages, a period which, although it possesses many bright aspects,

is on the whole dark, sordid, and cruel. Ecclesiastical power reaches its highest point, while the national monarchies are slowly developing. It was a period, as Principal Ernest Barker has observed, of *Estates* rather than of *States*. New life is infused into the stagnant mediæval world by the irruption of the Turks into Europe, causing the dispersing of what learning still remained at Constantinople, the Renaissance and the Reformation. The human mind is liberated from the incubus of authority, and starts anew upon its course of inquiry and inventions. Strong Nation-States emerge, each under its own king ("The new Messiah is the King," said a French historian), and each a law unto itself. A long and desperate, and sometimes heroic, struggle ensues, in which the religious motive, the political, the dynastic, and the commercial, are hopelessly intertwined. Then follows the race for colonial predominance; and in many countries for democratic rights. To this the nineteenth century added the nationalist movements which are the most important feature of the age. In the twentieth century World Power becomes the prize of contending nations.

One or two words of practical advice to the reader would perhaps not be taken amiss. To read history properly, or even intelligently, without some knowledge of geography is impossible. It is therefore highly desirable to have always at hand where it can easily be referred to some sort of

atlas. Best of all is an historical atlas; but failing that, an ordinary clear map of the country or the continent under discussion, not overcrowded with names, will serve a useful purpose. Of good and cheap atlases there is no dearth. For classical times there is a very serviceable one published by Dent in Everyman's Library. For modern history (including mediæval times) there is an excellent but slightly more expensive one by Professor Ramsay Muir. Most historical books contain maps illustrative of the subject dealt with by them. To learn to use an atlas intelligently as a companion to historical study it is very desirable that some work on the connection between history and geography should be read. Of such works the most useful undoubtedly is H. B. George's *Connection between History and Geography*. Another good book, though restricted in scope, is Freeman's *Historical Geography*.

Much can also be learned from an intelligent use of pictures. It is impossible to have that living and intimate knowledge of the past which all readers of history would desire to possess without knowing what the people of other times and other lands looked like, how they dressed, what manner of homes they inhabited, what sort of public buildings they erected, and many other similar things, which can be learned from even the poorest carvings, engravings, prints, and paintings. For those who have it within their power

without much inconvenience, an occasional visit to a good museum is sure to be time well spent, always provided that the visitor goes with the intention of seeing things connected with the particular reading he has in hand, and not with the ambition of examining all the glass cases in the building, beginning with A, and ending with Z!

Finally, let it be said that a visit to all places associated with important historical events is not only an agreeable recreation, but a most profitable mode of study. And be it remembered that, however desirable it may be to go abroad to distant lands for historical inspiration, it is not essential. By all means, if we are fortunate enough to be able to do so, let us visit the Acropolis, the ruins of the Forum Romanum, Pæstum on its plague-swept marsh, lovely Fiesole on its impregnable hill, Worms and Assisi, Salzburg and Leyden, Cordova and Toulouse, Rouen and Bruges, Iona and Crete, and many another spot of world-wide renown; but those who are unable to go on these distant expeditions, those whose travels are bounded by the shores of their own island home, may, if they have a seeing eye and a quickened imagination, derive the same sense of communion with the past as they stand in Westminster Abbey, on the castle rock at Edinburgh, among the colleges of Oxford, amid the ruins of Tintern and of Harlech, at Glastonbury and at St. David's, at Marston Moor and at Jordans.

Nay, even the humble parish church has its secret to tell, if we have only ears to listen. Through countless old buildings, old customs, old traditions, and old memories, the past peeps out at us, only too willing to share with us its magic spell.

Turning now from these things to the world of books it should always be borne in mind that the real spirit of the past is to be captured just as often, and often more effectually, through literature which does not purport to be "historical" as through those books whose express object it is to describe and to comment upon the past. To understand the real and innermost mind of a people, to see the very soul of a civilisation different from our own, it is necessary to steep one's self in the literature of the period, in the great books, the imperishable forms in which the hopes and the fears, the joys and the sorrows, the loves and the hatreds of the people have clothed themselves. No one can pretend for a moment to know the Greeks of the Great Age unless he has read the poetry of Homer, the tragedies of Æschylus, the comedies of Aristophanes and the dialogues of Plato, as well as the writings of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon. Dante is essential to a right understanding of the Middle Ages, and no other books, however numerous and however good, can be an adequate substitute. To understand Renaissance Italy, Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Politian are just as

valuable as Villari and Sismondi. The minutest detail of the struggle between the English Crown and Parliament in the seventeenth century is carefully recorded by Gardiner in his eighteen volumes; but he who knows them by heart would have but an inadequate conception of Puritanism without knowing also his Milton and his Bunyan. There are, furthermore, a few books, very few in number it is true, which directly influenced contemporary history, while at the same time winning for themselves a permanent place in literature. It is but rarely that so honourable a fate befalls the political pamphlet, but occasionally it has so happened. Two examples of this in English literature are Swift's *Conduct of the Allies*, and Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*. The first of these succeeded in overthrowing the powerful Whig Ministry of Queen Anne, backed as it was by the enormous prestige of Marlborough, with the laurels of Blenheim and of Ramillies still fresh upon his brow. The second fanned into flame the latent feeling of antagonism to the French Revolution in its early stages and created an all but unanimous desire for war in this country. Both are read to-day as examples of exquisite English prose.

WE are now in a position to proceed to consider the books which give the reader the best bird's-eye view of the entire field of history. It would be impossible to make a better beginning than by reading the second essay in Mr. Frederic Harrison's delightful volume, *The Meaning of History*. We shall have occasion again, more than once, to refer to this veteran author, to whom all lovers of good literature, as well as all students of history, owe so deep a debt of gratitude, and whose death, at the age of ninety-two, we so sadly deplore. The essay to which reference has just been made is called "The Connection of History." In length it is only some fifty pages; but every page is packed with thought, and every paragraph rich with learning. The whole is written in the charming style, strong and clear as the sound of a silver trumpet, which has made for Frederic Harrison, for over sixty years, a place among the great writers of our language. In this essay he traverses the ages with the confident and easy stride of one who is master of his subject. Stage after stage in the long history of humanity is clearly marked, and the connection

between them carefully explained. He who knows this piece of writing well has a firm and sure foundation of historical knowledge upon which to build; and the fuller knowledge, when it afterwards comes to be acquired, will fall naturally into its proper place.

Next in value and importance comes Mr. F. A. Marvin's *Living Past*. The author is now widely known as the learned editor of a most valuable series of books on history called the "Unity Series." These consist of lectures or essays, and many of our leading historians, philosophers, and scientists are among the writers. In *The Living Past* Marvin sketches the development of mankind from the earliest times down to the industrial age in which we live. He is more concerned with material civilisation than Frederic Harrison; and the book is, of course, six times as long as the essay. The fact that man has known how to use tools is seized upon, and with this central thesis the whole of his progress is described. The book is written throughout in an interesting style. It abounds in generalisations, all of them useful and suggestive, and many of them extremely brilliant. A wider view of the province of history is taken by Marvin than by most other historians, in that he includes the history of philosophy, of the natural sciences, and of mechanical inventions. There is less in his book than is usual about great soldiers such as Hannibal, Marlborough, and

Wellington, and more about philosophers and thinkers such as Thales, Newton, and Pasteur. From this book it is natural to pass on to the first volume in the series edited by Marvin, called *The Unity of Civilization*. This contains admirable lectures, in each of which an expert descants upon his own special subject. The volume is learned and interesting; and the only serious criticism that possibly could be brought against it is that it lacks unity!

In an address delivered some four years ago by Lord Bryce to the British Academy entitled "World History" we have the mature reflection of one who was, at the time of his death in 1922, the most learned, the wisest, and the most revered of living historians. It will not be necessary to remind the reader that Mr. H. G. Wells has written both a longer and a shorter *Outline of World History*. Both volumes are well planned and well illustrated. They are thought-provoking books, especially the shorter of them. The author was, however, inadequately equipped for his stupendous task; and the reader would do wisely to postpone a perusal of both these works until he has already acquired a firm grasp of the main facts of history, and is able to some extent at least to assign independently to celebrated men their rightful place in the temple of fame. When this has been done H. G. Wells will become a stimulating and challenging companion on the way.

UNDOUBTEDLY the best book with which to begin a study of the earliest times is Professor J. L. Myres's *The Dawn of History* (Home University Library). The book is short, and brilliantly written, while the author is known as the greatest authority on the period in this country. Here the reader will find in outline all the information he requires about the dawn of civilisation in the Eastern Mediterranean, and in the great valleys of the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates. The later chapters, in the same way, deal with the earliest authentic history of Italy and Central and Northern Europe. It is a book which cannot be rated too highly.

For the whole history of the Ancient World, beginning with the rise of Egypt and terminating with the fall of Rome, we have the single volume of J. H. Breasted, entitled *Ancient Times*. This book, as the author himself tells us, was intended primarily as a text-book for use in secondary schools. One can only wish that there were more text-books like it. The author is one of the most learned of American scholars, an acknowledged authority upon Egyptian antiquities. The style,

throughout the seven hundred pages, is delightful. Of dullness there is not a trace, and the accuracy is unimpeachable. A most valuable feature of the book is the large number of excellent maps and illustrations; and a very fair conception of what life was like in those by-gone days might be gained from an intelligent study of these alone. There is, moreover, a bibliography of a most useful kind, not over-burdened with names, in which books are mentioned in their order of importance. The reader would do wisely to keep this book constantly at his elbow while studying this period, for a better guide it would be impossible to discover.

The majority of readers will probably rest content with these two books; others, however, will, perhaps, wish to go more deeply into the subject. Some will be more interested in Egypt, others in Babylonia, others in Persia, others again in the beginnings of navigation along the shores of the Mediterranean and the Black Seas. For the benefit of such it will be advisable, therefore, to mention a few books which cover the ground in greater detail.

EGYPT

The startling results of recent excavations have shed new light upon the subject of Egyptian history, and awakened a new interest in it. The spade has been a most valuable ally to the

historian at all times, and has not ceased to lay before him new materials of immense importance from time to time. As a result of such discoveries previously accepted theories are often exploded in a day; and for the march of knowledge in this direction the reader is advised to study what is written by scholarly and competent persons in the best of our newspapers and journals. Among generally accepted books one might dwell upon the following:—Breasted's *History of Egypt* is a work of first-class authority. Hall's *Ancient History of the Near East* is also very good. Egyptian art and archæology ought not to be neglected. The Pyramids and the Sphinx are as well known as any works of art in the world. And many of us have stood, in mute admiration, before the few extant exquisitely modelled and coloured vases of the days of the Pharaohs. For these things Maspero's *Art in Egypt* is a useful book; and also the same author's *Manual of Egyptian Archæology*. Readers who do not understand German would find profit and pleasure nevertheless in examining the hundred and fifty-six beautiful illustrations of Egyptian sculpture contained in Feckheimer's *Die Plastik der Ägypter*. For excavation and discovery there is Flinders Petrie's *Ten Years' Digging in Egypt*, and Weigall's *Treasury of the Nile*. For religion and social life abundant information may be found in Breasted's *Development of Religion and*

Thought in Ancient Egypt, and in Erman's Life in Ancient Egypt.

BABYLONIA, PERSIA, ETC.

From Egypt we next turn to Babylonia, Assyria, Chaldea, Medea, and Persia—those mighty empires which waxed and waned with such frequency and machine-like regularity, and which, in the intervals between almost incessant wars, made a good many useful discoveries in the arts of peace.

John's *Ancient Babylonia* (Cambridge Manuals) is a short and competent introductory sketch. This can be followed by the relevant chapters in Hall's *Near East*, which we have already mentioned. Other useful books dealing with Babylon are: King's *History of Babylonia*, Jastrow's *Civilization of the Babylonians and Assyrians*, Sayce's *Babylonian and Assyrian Life and Customs*, and Goodspeed's *History of the Babylonians and Assyrians*. For Assyria the same books will, for the most part, apply, with the addition of John's *Ancient Assyria* (Cambridge Manuals) and Ragozin's *Assyria* (Story of the Nations).

For Medo-Persian history there is no really good modern book in English. Benjamin's *Story of Persia* (Story of the Nations) is interesting and popular, but scarcely adequate in view of subsequent investigations and discoveries. Then there is Rawlinson's *Five Great Monarchies*:

Persia, which makes very good reading. Jackson's *Persia, Past and Present* gives a good account of excavation and discovery.

THE JEWS

No survey of the Ancient World would be complete without some study of the little kingdom occupying a narrow strip of rocky territory along the shore of the Mediterranean between the snowy heights of Lebanon in the north and the parched Arabian wilderness in the south, which, despite its political insignificance, was to exert upon later times, down to our own day, an influence with which that of Greece and Rome only can be compared. For their history the most important book is obviously the Bible. But as history the Bible has to be read critically. Its opening books have but the slenderest foundation in fact; and, indeed, throughout its course the narrative is unreliable, written always with an object, and that very often centuries after the events which it records. It is rather to the prophets, than to the historians that we must go if we would understand the enduring power of the people. In them we find, expressed in magnificent prose and exquisite poetry, the Jewish conception of vocation and divine righteousness. There are countless books dealing with the ancient history of the Jews. The one-volume commentary on the Bible, edited by Peake, contains very scholarly

articles on various aspects of their life. For literary beauty and brilliant insight none can rival Renan's *History of the People of Israel*; but recent criticism finds much to quarrel with in its treatment of the theme. George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* is an invaluable book which all should read. Cornill's *History of the People of Israel* gives succinctly the conclusions of present-day scholarship. Perhaps the best short history is Foakes-Jackson's *History of the Hebrews*. An interesting little volume is Macalister's *History of Civilization in Palestine* (Cambridge Manuals). For Jewish religion there is a very wide choice of excellent books. Here we need only mention Budde's *Religion of Israel to the Exile*, Cheyne's *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, and Montefiore's essay in the first volume of Foakes-Jackson and Lake's *Beginnings of Christianity*. The native Jewish historian Josephus wrote the history of his own nation in the closing years of the first century. He had many qualifications for the task. He was of both royal and sacerdotal lineage, had been educated in the strictest school of the Pharisees, and to this had united a thorough knowledge of all the pagan wisdom of Greece and Rome. His style is easy, graceful, and refined, rising occasionally to a high pitch of eloquence. He had himself borne arms against the Romans in the last Jewish struggle for independence in the years 67-70 A.D. Captured

by Vespasian, he was present in the Roman camp when Titus captured Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. ; and his account of what was one of the most memorable sieges in history is perhaps the best thing he ever wrote. His *History* must be read with caution, though on the whole he is sincere, well-informed, and veracious. He writes as an Orthodox Jew, slightly infected with Greek scepticism.

GREECE

To pass from the history of the ancient empires to that of Greece is like emerging from a dimly lighted chamber into the full light of day. The antecedents of Greek history are still, to some extent, matter of conjecture; but the great days of Athens and Sparta are as well known to us as any period in the subsequent history of the world. Here, too, the general reader probably starts with some amount of knowledge; for a study of the languages, the literature, and the history of Greece and Rome has for so long been the foundation of liberal education in this country that some slight knowledge of them is universally diffused. Furthermore, the life, the modes of thought, and the forms of expression of the Greeks have entered into the very texture of our civilisation. Except the Bible, no books have left such a deep and abiding mark upon English literature as those of the Greeks, whether we regard the matter from the point of view of form or of content. And although the classical languages as instruments of education are now faced by formid-

able rivals, there appears to be, if anything, an increase in the influence we attach to a study of the institutions and the thought of ancient Greece. It is felt that in Hellenic civilisation we have something lovely and precious, shining with a beauty and a splendour which have never been approached by any other land in any other age. Differing profoundly from our own civilisation, it is at least as fine, and perhaps even finer, in quality. Not to be conversant with it is to be ignorant of some of the supreme achievements of the human spirit in the domains of art and philosophy. In architecture and sculpture, in lyric and epic poetry, in tragedy and comedy, in historical composition and in oratory, the Greeks remain unsurpassed. What they discovered in mathematics and physics, in biology and medicine, is still the foundation of our knowledge of those subjects. The world has produced no greater poet than Homer, no greater dramatist than Sophocles, no greater orator than Demosthenes, no greater philosopher than Plato, no greater political scientist than Aristotle, no greater mathematician than Euclid. When they wrought they wrought for all time; and their work remains to-day fresh and true and beautiful as it was five-and-twenty centuries ago. If a man were to be allowed to study just one century in the history of the world, and to be debarred from knowledge of all others, he would do wisely to choose for his period the

hundred years in the history of Athens which includes the life of Pericles. For such a study our materials are abundant—so abundant that the real difficulty is to know which to select and which to reject among books all of which are good. For the history of Greece has engaged the attention of many of the greatest minds that have ever turned their attention to the study of the past. One striking difference between the study of Greek history and that of Babylon and Egypt is that the Greeks had their own historians. The invention of historical composition is one of the many things we owe to them. The days of fragmentary inscriptions on walls and tablets, recording isolated events, such as the accession and death of kings or the winning of victories, are over, and instead we have continuous historical narration, displaying in many instances the most consummate literary skill, as well as a conscientious and scientific use of original authorities and sources of information. Among these writers the two great names are Herodotus and Thucydides, to which Xenophon must be added as an inferior third.

To Herodotus belongs (and with more justice than in the case of most sobriquets) the honourable title of "father of history." Thucydides enjoys the distinction of being, probably, next to Gibbon and Macaulay, the greatest historian the world has ever seen. In method as well as in style the two writers are very dissimilar. Herodotus is a

plain man telling a story in which he is immensely interested in an interesting but simple manner. He was obsessed by an insatiable curiosity, and spent years travelling about the world, penetrating into places where no Greek had hitherto ventured, and prying into the secrets, past and present, of many nations and religious cults. He is as great as a geographer as he is as an historian; and his book is as valuable to the student of comparative religion as it is to the student of political institutions and social life. He is garrulous and credulous, though not more credulous than other men of his time. But with all his love of gossip, and the avidity with which he seeks after the marvellous, he has left us an incomparably vivid picture of life in Greece and in the lands bordering upon the Eastern Mediterranean in that age. It is here that we have told with graphic power the wonderful tale of the mighty duel between the Greeks and the invading Persians under their great king Xerxes, the thrilling story of Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Salamis. It is here that we get to know and to admire the goodness of Aristides, the heroic bravery of Miltiades and Leonidas, and the brilliant skill and improvising genius of Themistocles. It is hardly necessary to caution students against accepting all the statements made by Herodotus without testing them by comparison with some up-to-date and scholarly book covering the same period. But this

old book speaks to us with the authentic accent of the ancient world; it gives us the real Hellenic "atmosphere," and that is a thing which no second-hand authority, scrupulously accurate though it may be, can give. By all means let the reader begin his study of Greek history with Herodotus. Fortunately we possess several excellent English versions of the work, and so simple and conversational is the style that it loses but little in translation.

Thucydides is a very different type of historian. He is less story-teller than scientific investigator and philosophic thinker. Writing of him, Mr. Frederic Harrison says: "Now Thucydides was in pre-eminent degree what Herodotus was not—a strictly scientific historian; one whose conception of the canons of historic precision has never been surpassed, against whom hardly a single error of fact, hardly a single mistaken judgment, has ever been brought home. Thucydides is much more than a great historian; or, rather, he was what every great historian ought to be—he was a profound philosopher. His history of the Peloponnesian War is like a portrait by Titian: the whole mind and character, the inner spirit and ideals, the very tricks and foibles, of the man or the age come before us in living reality. No more memorable, truthful, and profound portrait exists than that which Thucydides has painted of the Athens of the age of Pericles." Thucydides

is not, like Herodotus, easy to read. His is only a single volume of ordinary size; but the terseness of the style, the depth of the thought, the subtle analysis of character, the weighty political maxims, and the profound reflections upon institutions and men scattered over every page, make it a book which no man ought to pick up when in the mood only to be amused and to while away time. Comparatively few people would have a sufficient knowledge of Greek to read the somewhat difficult original with pleasure and ease; but there is a good and cheap translation (as there also is of Herodotus) published in Everyman's Library. No one who has ever read his account of the expedition to Syracuse, and of the disastrous naval battle which ensued (Book VII), or the magnificent panegyric on Athens which he puts into the mouth of Pericles (Book II) is ever likely to forget it; they belong to the very first class of literary composition. With a quotation from the latter of them we shall bring our mention of Thucydides to an end:—

“ If, then, we prefer to meet danger with a light heart, without laborious training, and with a courage which is gained by habit and not enforced by law, are we not greatly the gainers? Since we do not anticipate the pain, although when the hour comes, we can be as brave as those who never allow themselves to rest; and thus, too, our city is equally admirable in peace and in war. For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate

the mind without loss of manliness. Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty is with us no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the State because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless, character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of policy. The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act, and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance, but hesitate upon reflection. To sum up, I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace. This is no passing and idle word, but truth and fact; and the assertion is verified by the position to which these qualities have raised the State. For in the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to the report of her. No enemy who comes against her is indignant at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him. And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and of succeeding ages: we shall not need the praises of Homer or of any other panegyrist, whose poetry may please for the moment, although his representation of the facts will not bear the light of day. For we have compelled every land, every sea, to open a

path for our valour, and have everywhere planted eternal memories of our friendship and of our enmity."

Happy the State, ancient or modern, of which her greatest citizen can calmly and truthfully write such words!

The next Greek historian of importance, though greatly inferior to both Herodotus and Thucydides, is Xenophon. His *Memoirs* are interesting, being those of a renegade Greek who sought protection among the enemies of his country, and from that refuge directed merciless criticisms at the institutions among which he had been brought up. In his better-known *Anabasis*, the story of the romantic exploits of the Ten Thousand Greek warriors is told with moving simplicity and power. It is a tale of adventure so stirring that the school-boy reading it forgets the difficulties of grammar in his eagerness to know the outcome.

There remains to mention Plutarch, whose *Parallel Lives of the Greeks and Romans* has always enjoyed a well-merited popularity in this country. Living long years after the subjugation of the Greeks by the Romans, and being utterly deficient in the critical faculty so essential to the historian, he nevertheless has collected together a great mass of information about many of the leading Greek soldiers and statesmen of the olden times which, but for his assiduity, would have

perished altogether. Many of the stories which he tells with such engaging simplicity are doubtless fables without much foundation in fact; but they are fables which were implicitly believed by cultured Romans of Plutarch's day. He was at least much nearer to the man he describes than we are; and he could enter into their point of view in a way which is impossible to us.

We now turn from the ancient historians of Greece to the modern. One of the great difficulties with regard to Greek history is that there never was, in any real sense, a "Greece" at all. What we have is the separate history of a number of independent City-States, all sharing in the more important elements of Hellenic civilisation, but differing in race, dialect, type of character, and ideals; and although they united occasionally for a brief space to confront a common foe, they were far more frequently employed in waging implacable warfare one against the other. Thus there is a history of the early *Ægean* world, a history of the struggle between certain Greek cities and Persia, a history of Athens, of Sparta, and of Thebes, a history of the colonies planted by Greeks on the shores of the Black Sea and on the southern coast of Italy. But, paradoxical as it may seem, there was no "Greece" until the country had lost its independence, and had been absorbed, first by Alexander the Great, and afterwards by Rome.

Part III of Breasted's *Ancient Times* will again be found an admirable introduction to this study. He deals in it, clearly and vividly, with the main stages of the story—the ancient Ægean civilisation, both on the mainland and in the islands; the Greek conquest of the Ægean world; Greek civilisation in the age of the kings; the period of Mediterranean expansion; the age of the tyrants; the repulse of Persia; the rise and culmination of Athens; the Peloponnesian War and the destruction of Athens; the successive supremacy of Sparta and Thebes; and, finally, the conquest by Alexander of Macedon. A larger book, covering the whole period, is Bury's *History of Greece*. The learned Regius Professor of History at Cambridge tells the story with great wealth of detail, and with a thorough insight into the life of the times. It is not an entertaining book, but sound and reliable. It has long been customary to regard Grote's *History of Greece*—a monumental work in twelve volumes—as the standard book on the subject, and cheap editions of it have been issued. But it is intolerably long-winded, and rather a doctrinaire polemic on behalf of democracy as a system of government than a history. What is good in it has now been absorbed by shorter and more interesting books, and the reader may safely be recommended to leave it unread.

For the early Hellenic history the best books

are: Hawes's *Crete the Forerunner of Greece*, Mosso's *Dawn of Mediterranean Civilization*, Seymour's *Homeric Age*, and Botsford and Sickler's *Hellenic Civilization*. For real insight into Athenian life A. E. Zimmern's *Greek Commonwealth* stands first, without a rival. It is not so much a history as an examination of the foundations of Athenian greatness, and a description of life in the City-State in the age of Pericles. No man has ever brought to the subject a greater wealth of learning, a more original and acute mind, or a more engaging style. The book is of absorbing interest; and no reader having taken it up would lay it down unfinished. It is truly a classic. For an understanding of Greece on the political side, Zimmern's *Greek Commonwealth* may be usefully supplemented by Greenidge's *Greek Constitutional History*. Aristotle's *Politics* and Plato's *Republic* should also be read by all, the first for its study of Greek comparative politics, handled by an austere critic; the latter for political ideals, expounded by one of the loftiest minds that the world has seen.

Plutarch has written the lives of most of the eminent Greeks, and as many as possible of these should be read. The only outstanding modern biography is Abbot's *Life of Pericles*.

Coming now to the period of decline, and the rise of Macedon to greatness under Philip and Alexander, we find many good books to guide us

on our way. Curteis's *Macedonian Empire* is a comprehensive survey of the period. Wheeler's *Alexander the Great* (Heroes of the Nations) is popular and good. Mahaffy's *Alexander's Empire* and the same author's *Progress of Hellenism* are attractive works by one who was a complete master of that period. The spirit with which the most patriotic Athenians of the day viewed the progress of Macedon, and the gradual subjugation of their city, is best seen in the burning words of Demosthenes, the greatest of whose orations should certainly be read.

There are several excellent books dealing generally with Hellenic civilisation, and attempting to interpret for us the Greek point of view and attitude towards life. Of these the best is a recently published collection of essays entitled *The Legacy of Greece*. The contributors to it include such well-known scholars as Professor Gilbert Murray, Dean Inge, Professor Arnold Toynbee, Mr. Zimmern, and Mr. Livingstone. The book is a perfect treasure-store of wisdom and learning, and should be read by all who would understand the measure of our debt to Greece. Another interesting volume, gracefully written, and with copious quotations from the original authorities, is Mr. Lowes Dickinson's *Greek View of Life*. He describes and illustrates the attitude of the Greeks towards religion, law, the State, education, and social problems. He makes no

attempt to conceal the fact that between the ideals of Athens and those of Sparta there was a great discrepancy; but the conclusion he comes to is that, in spite of that, we are justified in speaking of a "Greek" view of life. Mention should also be made of Butcher's suggestive and stimulating work, *The Greek Genius*, and of two other works by Mahaffy—*Greek Life and Thought* and *Social Life in Greece*.

It was in the period with which we have just been dealing that political science was born. Neither the Oriental despotism nor the Jewish theocracy had asked any questions about their own genesis or present constitution. That they were ordained by God was for them the beginning and the end of knowledge, so that human speculation would have savoured of impiety. It was the Greek who also, with his boundless curiosity and scepticism, first began to analyse such conceptions as the State, Liberty, and Law. Political theory has become one of the most important branches of history, and this seems to be a convenient place to mention a few books dealing with it in its early stages.

Perhaps the most interesting and useful short account of early institutions is to be found in Mr. Edward Jenks's *The State and the Nation*. The book is divided into three parts, dealing respectively with primitive institutions, patriarchal institutions, and political society. The whole

treatment is admirably lucid and balanced. There is no attempt to foist upon the reader any one of the particular theories around which battles have raged, and still rage, among anthropologists. Nowhere else within so short a compass can the results of recent scholarship be ascertained. A much older, but still valuable, little book is Walter Bagehot's *Physics and Politics*. The unfailing charm of the author's style, his political insight, and his brilliant gift of helpful generalisation have combined to win a place for this work among the very limited number of political science classics. Maine's *Ancient Law* is still a standard book which all ought to read. In spite of its rather terrifying title, the book will be found of absorbing interest. Like Bagehot, Maine was a great writer, a great teacher, as well as a great scholar. *Ancient Law* will be read together with Sir Frederick Pollock's *Notes*. These point at those things in which Maine has been left behind by the subsequent advance of knowledge, and make good what in him is lacking. Another of Maine's books—*Early History of Institutions*—is interesting and illuminating, though it cannot compare in importance with *Ancient Law*.

For Greek political science the reader might begin with Sir Frederick Pollock's excellent little book, *Introduction to the Science of Politics*. It is a sketch of the development of Politics as a science from its source in Ancient Greece down to

our own times. No scholar has a deeper and a wider knowledge of the subject than Pollock; and no scholar possesses in more pre-eminent degree the ability to compress his knowledge within a narrow space, and to present it in a lively and attractive manner to the reader. This is a book to be read and re-read, and read yet again. Having thus laid a firm foundation, the reader will be able to proceed to Principal Ernest Barker's *Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle*; and to his later and much more interesting work, *Plato and his Predecessors*, the first and only volume that has yet appeared of larger work on Greek political thought. These are the standard books on Greek political theory. Most valuable also are Dean Inge's Hibbert Lectures on "The State Visible and Invisible," published in the second volume of his *Outspoken Essays*. Like all the Dean's writings they are bold, learned, brilliant, and penetrating. Indeed the whole volume is such as to place its author in the front ranks of European thinkers of our time.

Three rather older books might be mentioned which aim rather at describing the Greek City-State as it was than at examining the underlying theories of its existence. The first—Fustel de Coulonges's *La Cité Antique*—has long been a French classic, and a text-book for generations of Oxford undergraduates. It rather over-emphasises the religious side of the ancient

communities, but is otherwise trustworthy. It remains a veritable mine of learning, and is, moreover, written with that grace and elegance which we have come to associate with the work of all French historians of the first rank. A good English translation fortunately exists. With this should be read Warde Fowler's *City-State of the Greeks and Romans*. The book exhibits in full measure the qualities of its author (a scholar whose death we have only recently been lamenting)—great learning, and a style of singular delicacy and ease. The third book is Sidgwick's *Development of European Polity*. The relevant portions of this are thoughtful and perspicacious. A very fair attempt has been made by Mr. Delisle Burns, in an interesting little book called *Political Ideals*, to describe the ideals which have dominated political communities through the ages.

TRANSITION

The later history of Greece and the early history of Rome overlap; and in the period between the death of Alexander the Great and the emergence of Rome as a great conquering power we get the establishment of kingdoms carved by his generals out of the ruins of Alexander's empire, and the culmination of Phœnician power at Carthage. This is the period which witnessed the hellenisation of the whole Mediterranean coast, and the diffusion throughout all the bordering

countries of a more or less uniform culture. It is thus an important epoch, and deserves some attention. It may best be studied in Mr. Edwyn Bevan's very brilliant *House of Seleucus*; in Rawlinson's *Phœnicia* and A. J. Church's *Carthage* (the two latter in the *Story of the Nations*); in a most suggestive lecture entitled *Greeks and Barbarians* by Bevan, published in Marvin's *Western Races and the World*; and in the following works by Mahaffy: *Greek Life and Thought from Alexander to the Roman Conquest*, *The Empire of the Ptolemies*, and *The Silver Age of the Greek World*.

ROME

We now turn to the history of Rome, a period of at least seven hundred years, assuming it to begin with the conquest of Italy by the Romans, and to close with the reign of Theodosius at the end of the fourth century A.D. As in the case of Greece, so here likewise we have native historians to rely upon, though none belongs to quite so high an order as Thucydides. For the earliest times, which are veiled in the twilight of conjecture, Livy is our most brilliant, if not our most trustworthy, guide. Out of the hundred and forty-two books into which he divided his *History* only thirty-five have survived. His account of the foundation of Rome and of the first centuries of its existence is entirely uncritical, and belongs rather to the province of romance than to that

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of history. But the literature of the world contains no more splendid example of the work of the literary artist. The legends which he relates are so moving in their simple dignity and nobleness that to be deprived of them would leave us infinitely the poorer. When he reaches the great duel between Rome and Carthage (a turning-point in the history of the world) Livy becomes far more reliable, while losing nothing of his incomparable gift for story-telling. There is no more fascinating narrative anywhere to be found. Translations of Livy are numerous; the cheapest, as well as one of the best, is that recently published in Everyman's Library.

After him comes Polybius, a romanised Greek of exceptional political acumen, and one who adhered to truth and fact with the conscientiousness of a Thucydides. He began his *History of Rome* with the origin of the Second Punic War, and brought it to a close with the final overthrow of Carthage. He is an analyst rather than an historian; and with all its wisdom and accuracy his work cannot escape the charge of being dull. Unfortunately, out of his forty books only five remain entire. Polybius has been excellently translated by Schuckburgh.

The greatest of Roman historians without a doubt is Tacitus. Here is one who will stand comparison with the supreme writers of ancient as well as modern times. He deals mostly with

the inner life of Rome, the world of politics and backstairs intrigue, the fashionable life of the bath and the circus, and only occasionally does he look abroad at the big problems of Imperial Rome. He is interested in people rather than in institutions. Of him Mr. Frederic Harrison says: "Tacitus was a philosopher who, if inferior to Thucydides in calm judgment and insight into the compound forces of an entire age, was even greater than Thucydides as a master of expression and in his insight into the complex involutions of the human breast. The literature of history has nothing to compare with his gallery of portraits, with his penetration into character, his tragic bursts of indignation, his judicial sarcasms, and his noble elevation of soul." His *Annals* and *Histories* are invaluable for the political history of Rome in the narrower sense; but English readers will probably feel more interested in the two shorter pieces, the *Germania*, and the *Agricola*, both published in the year 97 A.D. in the reign of the Emperor Nerva and when Tacitus himself was Consul. The *Germania* is the best and fullest account we possess of the characteristics and habits of the Anglo-Saxons prior to their migration to this country. The *Agricola* is a vigorous defence, and glowing but discriminating estimate, of one of the most magnanimous and amiable of the Governors of Roman Britain. The pages of Tacitus sparkle with epigram and

a peculiarly mordant wit, and he had full command of every rhetorical device. The following are a few illustrative quotations taken at random: "To mention honesty and temperance in such a man would be an insult to his character. Nor did he even succumb to the last infirmity of noble minds, and court fame by ostentation or intrigue. Far from being jealous of his colleagues or quarrelsome with the imperial agents, he considered that there was no glory in getting the better of them, while to be worsted by them would be degrading." "Rumour is not always wrong: sometimes it has even been known to make appointments." "Personally I could sooner believe the pearls deficient in quality than mankind in greed." "To robbery, murder, and pillage they give the false name of Empire, and when they make a wilderness they call it Peace."

The best-known of all Roman historical writers is Julius Cæsar, thanks to the fact that, for centuries, his *Commentaries on the Gallic War* has been the first book to be put into the hands of learners of Latin. Generations of schoolboys have pondered over its pages, intent only upon the construing of its short, crisp sentences, yet probably quite inappreciative of its many excellent qualities, historical and literary. In the *Commentaries* (really a series of military dispatches) we have a soldier-statesman of the first rank telling with soldierly brevity and precision exactly

what he himself did, saw, and thought. His account of the wild English tribes against whom he fought on the borders of Germany, and of the Britons whose island home he twice invaded, can never lose its interest for the inhabitants of this land. Cæsar's other book, the *History of the Civil War*, deserves to be more widely read than it is. It is just as valuable to the historian as, and of even greater interest to the general reader than, the *Gallic War*. There is an excellent translation of Cæsar by Rice Holmes. Plutarch must not be forgotten; and what applies to his *Lives of the Greeks* applies also to his *Lives of the Romans*, with this important difference, that living nearer these later times, he was the better able to procure authentic information. His lives of Camillus, Pyrrhus, the Gracchi, Marius, Sulla, Sertorius, Lucullus, Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar, all deserve careful reading.

Of other Latin historians the most important are Suetonius, whose *Lives of the Cæsars* is a great treasure-house of knowledge as well as a most readable book, and Sallust, in whose *Catiline* and *Jugurtha* we have a brilliant account of conspiracy and war in the first century before Christ.

Although not in any sense "histories," the letters of Cicero and those of the younger Pliny throw a flood of light upon the times in which they were written, and are among the best

specimens we possess of the epistolary art. They are to be found, delightfully translated and printed in the Loeb Library. He who desires to know the real mind of Rome will not neglect Virgil and Plautus, Horace and Catullus, Lucretius and Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Nor will the wise reader neglect Macaulay's *Lays*, which are not only magnificent examples of ballad poetry, but are brimful of information about Roman antiquities.

The secondary authorities for the history of Rome are extremely plentiful, and the task of selection is not easy. The reader will find in the last two parts of Breasted's *Ancient Times* as good a summary as exists of the whole period from the foundation of Rome to its overthrow by the Barbarians. A larger book, which can be absolutely relied upon, covering the whole period, is Pelham's *Outline of Roman History*. The English translation of the eminent French historian Duruy's *History of Rome* is a good and scholarly work, specially valuable for its dealing with the second century B.C. The history of Rome, when we have once left behind the semi-mythical age of the kings, divides itself simply and easily into two great periods, the period of the Republic and that of the Empire. Each has, happily for us, been described by a supremely great historian, the former by Mommsen, the latter by Gibbon.

Mommsen's *History of Rome* (the English translation is in five volumes) is one of the world's great books. Starting with the dark period of origins, it traces the rise of Rome, the conquest of Italy, the great duel with Carthage, the subjugation of all countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and the consolidation of the whole under the dictatorship of Julius Cæsar. Religious, political, and social institutions are fully dealt with; and the causes of the marvellous success of the little City-State carefully analysed. The style is animated, vivid, and dignified, abounding in epigram and in passages of rare eloquence and beauty. His account of the campaigns of Hannibal, and that of the career of Julius Cæsar, are among the finest things in literature. In his use of authorities Mommsen was scrupulously careful. No stone was left unturned in the search after truth. Impartial and unbiased he certainly is not! Great historians never have been, neither Thucydides, nor Tacitus, nor Froude, nor Macaulay, nor Gibbon, nor Thiers, nor Treitschke, nor Motley. All of these had their own favourite cause, their own favourite historical characters; and it is no detriment to him to say that Mommsen had his. This must be borne in mind, especially when reading his masterly and trenchant chapters on the decay of the Senate, and the first adumbrations of the Empire under Julius Cæsar. In political philosophy Mommsen

was an orthodox Prussian, hating constitutionalism and democracy and believing in the "strong man." He saw the nineteenth-century constitutional contentions of his own native Germany reflected in the struggle between Cæsar and the Senate; and Cicero reminded him only of the hated and despised German Liberal. With all his little vanities, and all his foibles, Cicero was a great man, and Mommsen's treatment of him is outrageously unfair. It should, consequently, be corrected by a perusal of Strachan-Davidson's *Life of Cicero* (Heroes of the Nations).

Another most valuable and scholarly book on this period is the three-volume work recently written by Heitland, and called *The Roman Republic*. This has none of the literary qualities of Mommsen, but it is interesting, well-balanced, and comprehensive.

For the Punic Wars the chapters devoted to them by Mommsen are really sufficient. But the many readers who, no doubt, feel attracted by the personality of Hannibal, and who would like to know more about his private life, may be referred to his *Life*, by O'Connor Morris (Heroes of the Nations).

As one of the world's greatest men Julius Cæsar deserves special study. Soldier, statesman, administrator, he was supreme in all alike; and we have already seen that he is entitled to a high place among writers of history. The most

brilliant biography of him is that by J. A. Froude. Although not absolutely abreast of modern knowledge, this book is well worth reading for its vivid and glittering picture of life at Rome, and in the provinces, in the last days of the Republic. A more balanced and authoritative book is Warde Fowler's *Life of Cæsar* (Heroes of the Nations). It is a book of great charm, and its judgments can be relied upon.

At this point the reader should take up the first of the six volumes of Ferrero's *Greatness and Decline of the Romans*. As a writer Ferrero is almost as brilliant as Mommsen, and his learning is not inferior. A great lover of paradox, he sometimes sacrifices strict accuracy to literary effect; but his knowledge of economic and social conditions in the palmy days of the later Republic and early Empire is unrivalled. His insight into character is unerring; and, with a gift of portraiture which reminds one of Tacitus and Carlyle, he paints for us all the leading Romans of the period, so that the book resembles a gallery of pictures by a great master. Having read the big work, or selections from it, the reader should not fail to read the slender, but brilliant, volume, which Ferrero published as recently as 1921, called *The Ruin of Ancient Civilization*. Nowhere in the whole of historical literature are the wounds of decaying classical civilisation probed with a surer touch.

The next author to be mentioned is Edward Gibbon, surely the greatest historian the world has ever produced. Whatever other books have to go unread, the seven massive volumes of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* should be perused from the first page to the last. It is not a long book when we consider that it covers a period of twelve hundred years, including some of the most important epochs, and some of the most important movements, in the history of mankind. The first three chapters present us with a masterly survey of the Empire in the age of the Antonines. Then slowly, and in perfect order, the stately and magnificent pageant unfolds itself—the orientalising of the Principate, the corruption of manners, the insubordination of the legions, the rise of Christianity, the invasions of the Barbarians, the founding and the subsequent fortunes of the Eastern Empire, the break up of the Empire in the West, the spread of Mohammedanism, the founding of the Western monarchies, the struggle between Empire and Papacy, the Crusades, monasticism and the friars, and the final extinction of the Byzantine Empire when the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453. The style is dignified and animated, full of sparkling epigram, and abounding in irony and wit. The proportion is perfect, the whole work rising like a Greek temple from its foundation, firm, majestic, and beautiful. The book is a hundred and fifty

years old; but, in spite of the enormous strides which historical research has made in the intervening years, there is surprisingly little in Gibbon that requires revision or correction. His erudition was vast, and his accuracy almost impeccable. It is only necessary to caution the reader on two points—Gibbon's treatment of the Christian Church, and his treatment of the Byzantine Empire. Gibbon's attitude towards Christianity was that of the "enlightened" eighteenth century, the age of Voltaire, of Diderot, and of the French Encyclopædists. He disliked enthusiasm and emotion, and seems to have been constitutionally incapable of understanding the deep spiritual impulses of man. He is cynical with the cynicism of a man to whom the greatest heroes of past ages seem grotesquely small, and who believes that the great movements which swept men in thousands and tens of thousands into their swirling eddies were founded largely upon delusions. In consequence of this Gibbon's account of the rise and of the final victory of Christianity is unsympathetic and inadequate, and must be supplemented. But as this subject will demand further and fuller treatment at a later stage no more need be said about it here. The other subject in which Gibbon is lacking is knowledge and appreciation of the Byzantine Empire, from the reign of Justinian in the sixth century to its final overthrow in the middle of the fifteenth century.

I

He sees nothing in it but the antics of a corrupt Court, the intrigues of courtesans, and the steady march to well-deserved ruin of a frivolous, perverse, and decadent people. No one reading his account would suspect that Constantinople was, for a thousand years, the custodian of classical culture, and the great bulwark of Europe against the encroaching armies of Islam. It was beneath this shelter that the ungrateful infant kingdoms of the West lived secure until they had developed sufficient strength to fend for themselves, and had become sufficiently civilised to receive the treasures of literature and art created by ancient Greece and Rome. He who would realise the magnitude of this debt to the Eastern Empire should read Frederic Harrison's Rede Lecture on Byzantine History (it is published separately, and also in his volume of essays, *Among my Books*). A fuller account will be found in Professor Oman's *Byzantine Empire* (Story of the Nations), in Bury's *Later Roman Empire*, and in Dean Hutton's delightful book in the Mediæval Town Series. A good old book, which has not yet lost its interest and usefulness, is Finlay's *History of the Byzantine Empire*.

There are many good books which deal with various aspects of the history of the Roman Empire which the reader will find it useful to read in addition to Gibbon and Ferrero. An

excellent one, in which the fruits of the most recent research are presented in an interesting manner is Professor Stuart Jones's *Roman Empire* (Story of the Nations). The same learned author's *Companion to Roman Studies* will be found invaluable for the study of any part of Roman history. There is an interesting life of Augustus by J. B. Firth (Heroes of the Nations), and another by Schuckburgh. Ernest Renan's *Antichrist* (Nero), and *Marcus Aurelius*, should be read by all for their brilliant and unsurpassed pictures of social life in the reigns of those emperors. Indeed, all the volumes of Renan's *Origins of Christianity* will be found at least as useful for the history of Roman manners and culture as for the history of the growth of the Christian Church. It may well be doubted whether any scholar was ever more familiar than he with life in the eastern provinces of the Empire, from the first to the fifth century; and certainly no other man ever brought to the task of describing it such profound erudition united to such supremely great literary gifts. Mommsen's *Roman Provinces* is excellent. It is as scholarly, though not so readable, as his more famous *History*. For Britain under Roman domination the best short accounts will be found in Haverfield's monograph, "The Romanisation of Roman Britain," in the *Cambridge Mediæval History*, and in the various books dealing with our national

story. W. T. Arnold's *Roman Provincial Administration* is also a very useful book, illuminating, suggestive, and learned. On the subject of Roman civilisation as a whole there are several extremely good and just a few quite delightful books. One of the very best is Warde Fowler's *Rome* (Home University Library). The same author's *Social Life at Rome in the Age of Cicero* also well deserves to be read. Although only a brief outline of the subject, *Roman Civilization*, by A. F. Giles (People's Books), is clear and suggestive. Renan's works have already been mentioned. Among larger books Dill's *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, and his companion volume, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*, are unsurpassed. Both are packed with learning, and give a full and complete account of Roman ways of life and modes of thought in the periods with which they deal. They are not light reading, but the earnest seeker after knowledge will find himself amply rewarded for the time he spends upon them. Greenidge's *Roman Public Life* (Macmillan's Handbooks of Art and Archæology) is short and interesting. Friedländer's *Roman Life and Manners under the Early Empire* is full, scholarly, and authoritative. J. S. Reid in his *Municipalities of the Roman Empire* deals with one of the most important aspects of Roman civilisation, and one which

had a far-reaching influence upon the subsequent history of Europe. The religious beliefs and practices of the Romans prior to their conversion to Christianity find treatment in several of the books already dealt with. An interesting work devoted exclusively to this topic is Warde Fowler's *Religious Experience of the Roman People*.

In nothing has Rome exerted a more profound and lasting influence than in the matter of Law. Even to-day the legal systems of the whole civilised world are based either upon English Law or upon Roman Law. This subject, therefore, merits special attention. Gibbon has given us two magnificent chapters (Chapters III and XLIV) dealing in masterly fashion with the main principles of Roman jurisprudence, and tracing its historical development from the Twelve Tables to the Code of Theodosius. The majority of readers doubtless will be content with these chapters. Those, however, who desire to pursue the matter further will find ample material in Sohm's *Institutes of Roman Law*, in Maine's *Ancient Law*, in Muirhead's *Historical Introduction to the Private Law of Rome*, and in Hunter's *Introduction to Roman Law*. On the question of the influence of Roman Law in the Middle Ages, the best book is Vinogradoff's *Roman Law in Mediæval Europe*. The same author's lecture

in Marvin's *Evolution of World Peace* is also illuminating. To all British readers of Roman history a comparison will no doubt occur between the Romans, the great imperialists of the ancient world, and ourselves, the great empire-builders of the modern world. It is a fascinating subject for study and thought, and one rich in practical interest. The parallel has been worked out, with unrivalled wealth of learning and political wisdom, by Lord Bryce, in his essay, *The Roman and British Empires* (it is published separately as well as in Vol. I of his collection of essays, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*).

EARLY CHRISTIANITY

It has already been said that the rise of Christianity demands separate, if necessarily brief, treatment. Indeed, it would be difficult to overrate the importance of ecclesiastical history in the period of Roman decay and throughout the Middle Ages. So competent an authority as Lord Bryce has stated that if any single stream is to be followed in preference to any other in the history of Europe from the days of Tiberius, that stream must be the ecclesiastical.

Of the Founder of Christianity no completely satisfactory biography has ever been written, and it is perhaps too much to hope that one ever will. The best account will be found in the

Synoptic Gospels, read in the full light of modern criticism. Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, a famous book in its day, and one which had the honour of being translated into English by George Eliot, is now antiquated, and need not be read. Renan in his *Life of Jesus*, T. R. Glover in his *Jesus of History*, and Papini in his *Life of Christ*, present us with fascinating and enduring impressionist portraits. Seeley's *Ecce Homo* is still valuable for its treatment of the ethical teaching of Jesus. The Bishop of Gloucester (Dr. A. C. Headlam) has given us in his *Life and Work of Christ* what is probably the most learned and balanced account in the English language. Schweitzer in his *Quest of the Historic Jesus* has fairly stated the position, and summed up the conclusions of modern criticism.

For Apostolic Christianity we have a series of brilliant pictures in Renan's *Apostles* and in his *St. Paul*. All the theories propounded in these two books must not be accepted, for they have not been endorsed by subsequent research; nevertheless, their fundamental value has not been impaired. Nowhere are Renan's marvellous intuition, his insight into character, his graphic powers of description, and his style of haunting beauty and grace, to be seen to greater advantage than in the *St. Paul*. Sir William Ramsay has written a number of most valuable books on St.

Paul, and the world in which he lived and worked, containing largely the results of his own researches and excavations in Asia Minor. Specially deserving of mention are his *Cities of St. Paul*, *St. Paul the Roman Citizen*, and *St. Paul the Traveller*. Two volumes only have hitherto appeared of what promises to be a most valuable work: Foakes-Jackson and Lake's *Beginnings of Christianity*. Vernon Bartlet has written a learned and useful manual, *The Apostolic Age*.

For the history of Christianity during the first three centuries of struggle and persecution down to the conversion of Constantine there are two particularly good books. The first is Glover's *Conflict of Religion in the Roman Empire*, a singularly brilliant and penetrating exposition of the rival faiths and ideals which fought for supremacy in the first century. The other is Gwatkin's *Early Christianity*. Gwatkin was one of those few and fortunate people who carried an enormous weight of learning lightly, and who succeeded in making the dullest topics in history absorbingly interesting.


For dogma, Harnack's *History of Christian Dogma* is the standard work. There are several short books dealing with ecclesiastical history as a whole. One of the best, and undoubtedly the most brilliant, is Sohm's *Outline of Church History*. A book on a slightly bigger scale is

Schubert's *Outlines of Church History*. A most interesting work, full of the most fruitful suggestions and most valuable reflections, is Carlyle and Bartlet's *Christianity in History*. With the religious movements of the Middle Ages we shall deal in the ensuing section.

THE Middle Ages is the name generally applied to the period of history which begins with the overthrow of the Western Empire by the Barbarians at the opening of the fifth century, and comes to a close some time towards the end of the fifteenth century. But sometimes the name is limited to the period which elapses between the coronation of Charlemagne in the year 800 and the fifteenth century; and when this is done, it is customary to call the preceding four centuries the Dark Ages. For bibliographical purposes it is just as well, perhaps, to observe this division, and to speak of the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages as distinct and separate periods.

As to the quality and value of the Dark Ages there is little or no dispute, all people agreeing that they were truly "dark," a veritable glacial age of European culture. Throughout practically the whole of Western Europe the rich treasures of classical civilisation were submerged beneath a flood of ruthless and unabashed barbarism. In a few monasteries, in an occasional

bishop's palace only, did the lamp of learning continue to shed a flickering and uncertain light. In a few fortunate cities alone did the scheme of municipal government which had been one of the last products of Roman rule maintain an unbroken continuity, thus to become, when a more propitious season had returned, a pattern for the Free Cities of the later Middle Ages. The completeness and the rapidity with which the barbarisation of Europe took place are almost incredible; but the evidence for it is so overwhelmingly strong that only German historians, determined at all costs to prove that the Fatherland at all times gave the lead to the world in culture, dream of calling it in question. The steady stream of literary output suddenly ceased; and for centuries hardly anything worthy of the name of literature was produced. A few rugged verses, records of ghastly bloodshed and the pillaging of lands and cities, a few barren monkish chronicles written in barbarous Latin, are all that have come down to us from those times, and no one need regret the paucity of these. The vast majority of the people, even those in high station in Church and State, were totally illiterate. One remembers Alfred the Great's lament about the complete ignorance of Latin on the part of the English priests. In architecture we witness the same decay. Noble buildings were ruthlessly demolished, but no worthy substitutes were



erected to take their place. Instead of the refined manners and modes of life of the Roman provinces we should behold, if we were to visit a German or an English village in the seventh century, such an absence of all refinement and comfort as could only be paralleled to-day in a Hottentot village in the African forest. In politics the decline had been equally complete. Instead of the ordered system of government devised by the Romans, resting upon great principles of law, we have the rude and capricious authority of the robber or pirate chieftain, an authority which endured only so long as he successfully led his fellow-robbers in wars against their neighbours, and into fresh fields for plunder. Even the traditions of Imperial Rome seem to have been forgotten; and with them disappeared all traces of the greater part of Greek and Latin literature. It is a significant fact that the first acquaintance of a re-awaking Western Europe with the classical writers of antiquity was made through the Arab conquerors of northern Africa and southern Spain. Arab Mohammedans, together with the scholars of Byzantium, were the custodians and the representatives of classical civilisation throughout the Dark Ages, and well on into the Middle Ages themselves. If the whole of this period had never been, or if all record of it had completely vanished, we should not be a whit the worse off; on the contrary,

we should be relieved of the haunting dread that what has occurred once might occur again. Our own civilisation is not finer, nor more firmly built, than was that of Greece and Rome; and there are men of intellect and vision in the world to-day who are anxiously pointing out many palpable indications of a similar decline and deterioration. Whether Europe is destined to revert to barbarism in the comparatively near future is a question which time alone can answer; but it certainly is not a question which we can safely ignore or lightly set aside.

Of contemporary historical literature the Dark Ages produced hardly anything that need engage the reader's attention even for a moment. Indirectly the work of Boëthius (a high-souled conspirator who was imprisoned by Theodoric, king of the Goths) called the *Consolation of Philosophy*, throws light upon the thought of cultivated Romans in the last age of the Empire's decline. This book was immensely popular in the Middle Ages; and it has acquired an additional interest for us owing to the fact that it was translated into English by King Alfred, who also made copious additions to it. In this revised and enlarged form Boëthius became one of the first prose works written in the English language, though it was an English not one line of which would be intelligible at a glance to the reader of to-day. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, also started

by King Alfred, is a bald record of events; but it has the merit of being contemporary with the incidents which it records, and is as trustworthy as any historical document of those times. But undoubtedly the best and most valuable historical work produced during the Dark Ages is the Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of England*, written somewhere about the year 731 A.D. Bede was a learned monk who lived in the great monastery at Jarrow; and there he wrote, in what is a very fair example of monkish Latin, his account of the progress of Christianity in his native land. As an historian, and indeed as a prose writer, Bede towers above all the writers of the Dark Ages. He is a real historian, and not merely an analyst. Although not "scientific" in the later meaning of the term, he nevertheless is not altogether credulous. His mind and his outlook were those of his age, and we find him quite naturally describing the most marvellous miracles in the same matter-of-fact way that he describes the most ordinary occurrences. To Bede we are indebted for our knowledge of the conversion of the English by Augustine and his successors, of the fierce fight with paganism, and the death of Alban the first English martyr. Unfortunately he does not tell us as much as we should like to know about the old Celtic Christianity which was at the height of its influence in Wales and Ireland when he wrote. How many

hundreds of tales of miraculous cures would we not gladly surrender in return for a little more authentic knowledge of the movement which made of Glastonbury and Iona holy ground! Of the church of St. Patrick and St. David, Bede has but little to tell us; and this is all the more deplorable when we recollect that the monastic schools of the Celtic Church were far ahead of all others in Western Europe in learning and culture. Indeed, Bede himself was, in a sense, a product of these schools. But the voice of criticism should be stilled at the thought that he is the author of one of the few books really worth reading written in a period of four hundred years. The indefatigable King Alfred did his fellow-countrymen the great service of translating Bede's *History* into English; and in this case too the royal scholar added to, and took away from, the original. On the Continent Gregory of Tours wrote a *Chronicle* which is a useful collection of facts, though not in any sense a book to be read. His scribe, Asser, wrote a long Life of King Alfred; and Eginhard wrote a Life of Charlemagne.

We now turn to the books written about that period by scholars of later times. An excellent introduction to the study of the Dark Ages is R. W. Church's *Beginning of the Middle Ages*. Dean Church is known as a man of great literary gifts, and of varied and sound learning; and nowhere in all his numerous writings do those qualities

appear to greater advantage than in this little book. In two hundred lively and fascinating pages he conducts us through the whole period, dealing in turn with the barbarian migrations, the fall of Rome, the invasions of the Vandals, the Franks, the Goths, and the Huns of Attila, the Gothic kingdom of Theodoric in Italy (the Dietrich of Bern of the *Nibelungenlied*), with its centre at Verona, the desperate attempts of the great generals, Belisarius and Narses, to re-conquer the west on behalf of the Byzantine Empire, the founding of the Lombard kingdom of Northern Italy, and of the Frankish kingdom of Clovis in what had been Roman Gaul, the conquest and the conversion of Britain, the decay of the Merovingians, and the rise of the Carolingians, culminating in the resuscitation of the Empire under Charles the Great. In addition, we have lucid chapters on the Church and the Papacy, on the Eastern Empire, and on the rise and spread of Mohammedanism. The causes of the decline of Rome are carefully analysed; and one finds here, in a few pages, summarised in masterly fashion, what one would have to seek through four thick volumes of Gibbon.

Another fascinating, but enormously long, book is Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*. Hodgkin belongs to that small and interesting group of amateur historians who combined a practical

knowledge of finance with a keen interest in the past. The group includes, in addition to Hodgkin : Grote, whose twelve volumes on Greek history we have already mentioned ; Roscoe, the author of valuable works on Renaissance Italy ; and Walter Bagehot, whose *Physics and Politics* has already been dealt with, and whose better-known work, *The English Constitution*, remains to be mentioned at a later stage. For those who have abundance of time, and who enjoy an interesting story extremely well told, Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders* may be recommended with confidence.

A text-book on a larger scale than Dean Church's little manual, but written in a much less attractive style, is Sir Charles Oman's *Dark Ages*. It is very comprehensive ; and the fact that the author occupies one of the chairs of history at Oxford should be sufficient guarantee for its accuracy. The book is a fair sample of the work of the modern historian whose intention it is to instruct, and who desires nothing so little as to amuse his readers.

The first two volumes of the *Cambridge Mediæval History* will be found invaluable by all those who desire to prosecute their studies further, and to find, in convenient form, a full account of all the most recent research. The volumes also contain excellent bibliographies. But the *Cambridge Mediæval History* is not a

book to be read right through. It is rather a collection of essays, some of them better than others, on various aspects of the period in question. Authors of many nationalities have collaborated in the work. This ensures that every topic shall be dealt with by a recognised expert; but it has the grave defect that it produces a lack of homogeneity and continuity. The following chapters will be found of special interest to the general reader—"Constantine and his City"; Haverfield's "Roman Britain"; Barker's "Italy and the West"; Vinogradoff's "Social and Economic Conditions"; Stewart's "Thoughts and Ideas of the Period"; Hutton's "Gregory the Great"; Bevan's "Mahomet and Islam"; Becker's "Expansion of the Saracens"; Warren's "Conversion of the Kelts"; Corbett's "English Institutions"; Sediger's "Conquests and Coronation of Charles the Great"; Vinogradoff's "Foundation of Society"; and Foakes-Jackson's "Papacy."

Many readers will no doubt be sufficiently interested in the rise and spread of Mohammedanism to desire to know more about it than is contained in the ordinary text-books. The Arab culture of the Middle Ages, as seen especially among the Moors at Cordova, Granada, and Seville, was far finer than the Christian culture of the same period. What scientific, mathematical, and even philosophical, knowledge

existed in the world then was held by them; and from that source it percolated slowly, partly through immediate contact in Spain, partly through the medium of the Crusaders, and partly through the merchants of such enterprising cities as Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Amalfi, into the more backward mind of Christendom. In Gerbert of Aurillac—less well known as Pope Sylvester II—we have a notable and startling example of even a great Churchman who had sat at the feet of Mohammedan teachers, and in consequence become the most learned Christian of the day. There was some degree of friendly intercourse between Christians and Arabs and Saracens, especially in the best days of chivalry; and it was really not until Mohammedanism had come to be identified in men's minds with the Turkish barbarians that a system of relentless persecution began. When we consider that, at the lowest computation, there are a hundred and seventy-five millions (some put it at two hundred and seventy millions) of Mohammedans in the world to-day, and that of these about a hundred millions are British subjects; and when we consider further that Mohammedanism is a religion rapidly gaining ground in the world at present, we cannot but be interested in its origin and its progress during its infancy.

From Gibbon much will have been learnt about the rise of this great religion; but the treatment

is entirely unsympathetic. Indeed, Gibbon's contempt for the makers of Mohammedanism is only exceeded by his contempt for the Christian theologians who quarrelled and fought over the creeds in the first half-dozen General Councils. Carlyle, in his *Heroes and Hero Worship*, has a chapter on Mahomet, full of sympathy, and abounding in flashes of brilliant insight. Modern scholarship is well represented by Margoliouth's *Mohammed* (Heroes of the Nations). Washington Irving wrote an interesting *Life of Mahomet*, approaching the subject from the standpoint of a scholar who had steeped himself in the culture of Moorish Spain. Renan has two brilliant essays—"Mahomet and the Origins of Islamism" (published in his *Studies of Religious History*), and "Islamism and Science" (published in *Poetry of the Celtic Races*, a volume of miscellaneous essays in the Scott Library). The most comprehensive treatment of Mohammedanism as a missionary religion will be found in Sir T. W. Arnold's *Preaching of Islam*, an altogether delightful book. A short account by the same learned author will be found in the volume of lectures, edited by Marvin, *Western Races and the World*. There is an interesting volume on Mohammedanism, by Margoliouth, in the Home University Library.

Charlemagne belongs, perhaps, more properly to the Middle Ages than to the Dark Ages. At

the beginning of his reign the night was almost spent, and by its close dawn had definitely broken, and Europe had entered once more upon one of its periodic revivals of learning. The Norman settlements in Normandy, England and Sicily, and the great Cluniac reformation within the Church, which were going on during the tenth and eleventh centuries, belong to the new and better order of things. Most of the larger text-books we have already mentioned deal fully with the reign of Charlemagne. Further information of a more intimate and personal nature can be obtained in the short *Life* by Hodgkin (Foreign Statesmen Series), and in the larger one by H. W. C. Davis (Heroes of the Nations).

There is a good deal that is of special interest, though perhaps not of much importance, in the history of England during the Dark Ages; and there are some good books dealing with the subject. As a full and accurate text-book to have always at hand the reader has a choice between the first volume in the *Political History of England*, written in an attractive style by Thomas Hodgkin, and Oman's *England before the Norman Conquest*. Which of these two books is the better is entirely a matter of taste: nothing will be gained by reading both. Two books by that amiable and brilliant writer, John Richard Green, deal with the period—his *Making of England* and his *Conquest of England*. Modern

historical research has succeeded in picking holes in both; but their limpid style, their sympathetic insight, and graphic description of men and events, make them books which have an abiding value. They are worth a library of learned disquisition without a spark of life or a glimmer of intelligence. The reader will be well advised to read every book by J. R. Green. For the constitutional history of the period, we cannot do better than turn to the first volume of Bishop Stubbs's *Constitutional History of England*, which remains the standard work on the subject. It is a portentously dull book; but no writer perhaps, with the exception of Maitland, ever succeeded in making constitutional history anything but dull to the general reader. The student who can so far overcome his fear at their rather forbidding titles will find a rich harvest of knowledge, and much agreeable amusement, in the brilliant works of F. W. Maitland—*Constitutional History of England, Domesday and Beyond*, and *History of English Law* (of the latter Sir Frederick Pollock is joint-author). For ecclesiastical affairs, which is the most important branch of history in that period, we have a tolerable book by William Hunt—*The English Church Down to 1066*—being the first of a series of volumes by various authors covering the whole field of English Church History, some of them good, others extremely bad.

Alfred the Great, the most perfect of all the

long line of English kings, deserves a careful study. He and Charlemagne tower above all the secular figures of that age, and rightly take their place in the somewhat small band of the world's supremely great men. There is a scholarly *Life of Alfred* by Plummer, and a volume of essays, written by leading scholars, and edited by Alfred Bowker. Mr. Frederic Harrison, who is an Alfred enthusiast, has written several delightful pieces about him. These will be found in his *Memories and Thoughts*, and in his *American Addresses*.

We now embark upon the study of the Middle Ages, strictly so called, a period which may be said to begin with the coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire at Rome in the year A.D. 800. Opinion differs widely as to the value of this period. Many can see nothing in the Middle Ages except barbarous and petty wars among the nobility, obscurantism in the Church and abject submission to those in authority, and despairing acquiescence in a miserable lot on the part of the common people of every land. It was the age of plagues and persecution, of massacres and pillage, of ignorance and bestiality. It was a period when the human mind was paralysed so that it produced nothing, and the human spirit so that it bore no fruit. This is the view which, on the whole, seems to commend itself to Professor Bury, whose little book, *The History of Freedom* (Home University Library),

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ought to be read by all. It is a brilliant attack upon the so-called "ages of faith." Other scholars, however, and that in ever-increasing numbers in these recent years, take a far more favourable view. Indeed, there is a marked tendency to idealise the Middle Ages, and to find there all the virtues which our world most lacks to-day. An age, it is said, should always be judged by its best products; and we cannot withhold our admiration from a period which produced the exquisitely beautiful Gothic churches, the supremely great poetry of Dante, and the marvellously subtle reasoning of the Schoolmen. Where in modern times, it might be asked, can we find anything more brave and generous than mediæval chivalry at its best; where a more sincere devotion to learning than that which took scholars in hundreds of thousands, far from their native land, to the new Universities of Paris, Bologna, Prague, and Oxford; where a more striking union of intellect and character than in Bernard of Clairvaux; where a more perfect blend of all the virtues than in Francis of Assisi; where a more healthy civic life than that which prevailed in countless cities, from Perugia to Lübeck, and from Coventry to Nuremberg; where a fairer system of industry than in the Guilds; where a more truly able race of statesmen than in the mediæval Church, and occasionally on mediæval thrones? Writing of the Middle Ages, Professor

H. W. C. Davis, one of the foremost mediæval scholars of our day, says :

“ Measure it, however, by the memories and the achievements that it has bequeathed to the modern world, and it will be found not unworthy to rank with those of earlier and later Golden Ages. It flourished in the midst of rude surroundings, fierce passions, and material ambitions. The volcanic fires of primitive human nature smouldered near the surface of mediæval life; the events shrouded in mediæval history are too often those of sordid and relentless strife, of religious persecutions, of crimes and conquests mendaciously excused by the affectation of a moral aim. The truth is that every civilisation has a seamy side, which it is easy to expose and to denounce. We should not, however, judge an age by its crimes and scandals. We do not think of the Athenians solely or chiefly as the people who turned against Pericles, who tried to enslave Sicily, who executed Socrates. We appraise them rather by their most heroic exploits and their most enduring work. We must apply the same test to the mediæval nations; we must judge of them by their philosophy and law, by their poetry and architecture, by the examples that they afford of statesmanship and saintship. In these fields we shall not find that we are dealing with the spasmodic and irreflective heroism which illuminates a barbarous age. The highest mediæval achievements are the fruit of deep reflection, of persevering and concentrated effort, of a self forgetting self in the service of humanity and God. In other words, they spring from the soil, and have ripened in the atmosphere of a civilised society.”

This quotation is from the Introduction to *Mediæval Europe*, in the Home University

Library, an excellent little book which should form for everybody the starting-point of a study of the Middle Ages. One other interesting quotation, this from Dr. A. J. Carlyle's lecture on "Progress in the Middle Ages" in Marvin's *Progress and History*. He says :

"A rough, disorderly, turbulent, greedy, cruel world, but it knew the human soul, and it knew the human heart. The ancient world had ended in a great destruction, but the sadness and emptiness of its last days compel us to feel that it was well that it should end. And the new world was a world of life, of crude force and restless energy, and from it we have received the principles and the forms of a great civilisation, and the temper which is never satisfied, for there is no end to life."

It is when we are confronted with such diametrically opposite views of a period so thoroughly well known as the Middle Ages, each championed by scholars of the calibre of Bury and Carlyle, that we realise the absolute futility of all the talk about a "science" of history.

The most interesting book on the Middle Ages as a whole is Lord Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, seventeen out of the twenty-four chapters of which deal with the period. To praise this work would be impertinent, for it has long taken its place in the front rank of historical classics. Originally published in 1864 as an Oxford Prize Essay, it was enlarged and revised repeatedly by its author in the course of the succeeding fifty

years. There have been six separate editions, some eighteen reprints, and several translations into German, French, Italian, and Hungarian. Probably no English historical writer since Gibbon has had such a vogue abroad. The book is not a history of the Middle Ages; it is, as its title indicates, a study of the Holy Roman Empire, the most curious, and one of the most interesting, political structures that the world has ever seen. Founded by Charlemagne in 800, it shared with the Papacy the foremost position in the West down to the rise of strong national States in the era of the Protestant Reformation; and long after all real power had vanished from its grasp, when it was "neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire," it continued to enjoy an attenuated and decrepit existence until it was finally abolished by Napoleon in 1806. Even then its unquiet ghost arose from the tomb after Waterloo, and continued to colour German politics throughout the nineteenth century. Bryce was admirably equipped for the task of narrating its history. He was a man of vast erudition, a great jurist, an accomplished linguist, a traveller to whom hardly a place on the face of the earth was unfamiliar, a man of affairs who, as Cabinet Minister and Ambassador, had acquired a knowledge of statecraft from within, and the writer of a style at once vigorous, dignified, and easy. His chapters on the Barbarian Invasions, the Empire

and the Papacy, the Theory of the Mediæval Empire, the Empire as an International Power, and the City of Rome in the Middle Ages, are models of what historical composition ought to be.

But the *Holy Roman Empire* is not a textbook. It does not profess to set down the history of the various European countries, some of which it ignores altogether, and others of which it deals with only in cursory fashion. For a comprehensive account of all the western nations it will be necessary to go elsewhere. With all its faults, and in spite of its age, still the best book on the Middle Ages in detail is Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*. This work is in nine volumes, but so agreeable is the style in which it is written that few readers are likely to find it tedious. It is diffuse, and sometimes inaccurate; still the picture it paints is, on the whole, a faithful one, and for the general reader there is no more interesting and compendious history of mediæval times in existence. Milman intended his work to be an antidote to Gibbon, by showing to the world that the sneers and scoffs of that arch-sceptic at the Christian Fathers and their successors were unmerited. He shows them to have been, not a pack of superstitious and intriguing fools and rogues bent upon keeping the people in subjection and in intellectual darkness, but on the contrary the pioneers of civilisation, builders of a new, a healthier, and a higher moral and

spiritual world. Gibbon sees in those ages nothing but the decay of the splendid civilisation of Rome, and casts regretful glances at a Golden Age in the past. Milman sees in the same ages the growth of the new civilisation of Christian Europe, and looks to his Golden Age in the future. From its first publication Milman's *History* took its place among the great books of history. Froude, who was no mean judge of historical literature, said in writing to its author about it :

" You have written the finest historical work in the English language. Calmness and impartiality, a belief that in a divinely governed world no systems of faith or piety have taken enduring hold on mankind unless the truth in them has been greater than the falsehood—these are essentials of a great writer, and these you possess more than anyone who has taken such subjects in hand."

This would be excessive praise to-day ; but at the date when the words were written the masterpieces of Froude himself, of Macaulay, and of Motley had not been composed. Froude only erred in putting Milman above Gibbon. Macaulay was nearer the mark when he declared the book to be excellent in matter but bad in style.

Another well-known old book is Hallam's *Middle Ages*. This covers practically the same ground as Milman, but in the more modest compass of three volumes. It is, however, so extremely dull that it is certainly a harder task

to read these three volumes of Hallam than the nine volumes of Milman.

The heart of mediæval Europe was, of course, the Papacy. Its history during the period has been told with a wonderful wealth of learning in Gregorovius's *History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, a long but interesting work in eight volumes. It has been translated from the original German by Hamilton. There are several good biographies of mediæval figures which well deserve to be read. The Foreign Statesmen Series contains a volume on King Philip Augustus of France by Arthur Hassall. In the Heroes of the Nations Series there are several good Lives, including *Jeanne d'Arc*, by Mrs. Oliphant; *Robert Bruce*, by Herbert Maxwell; *Saladin*, by S. L. Poole; *Saint Louis*, by Frederick Perry; *Owen Glyndwr*, by A. G. Bradley; *Wyclif*, by Lewis Sergeant; *Edward I*, by Jenks; *Henry V*, by Kingsford; *Charles the Bold*, by Ruth Putnam; and *Roger the Great of Sicily*, by Curtis. The Twelve English Statesmen Series has the following: *William the Conqueror*, by Freeman; *Henry II*, by Mrs. J. R. Green; and *Edward I*, by Tout. Other outstanding biographies, some because they themselves are intrinsically good, others because they happen to be the only available account in biographical form of a notable person, are: Sabatier's *Francis of Assisi*,¹ a well-nigh perfect

¹ Since this was written Chesterton has published his fascinating study of St. Francis.

book; Dean Church's *St. Anselm*, a book as charming as it is learned; Cotter Morison's *St. Bernard*, one of the best biographies in the English language; and Andrew Lang's *Maid of France*, a fascinating study of Joan of Arc.

Civic life was almost as important a feature of mediæval times as it was of the ancient classical world. The cities were largely, sometimes even completely, independent of all outside authority, save the spiritual authority of the Pope and his emissaries; and each possessed a character of its own differing from that of its neighbours. Fortunately we have ample means (thanks, mainly, to that admirable series of books, published by Dent, called the Mediæval Towns Series) of studying the general type of mediæval city, as well as the local variations upon that type. Some of the best of these volumes are the following: *Florence*, by E. G. Gardner; *Venice* and *Paris*, by Thomas Okey; *Padua*, by Cesare Foligno; *Brussels*, by Gilliat-Smith; *Assisi*, by L. D. Gordon; *Prague*, by Count Lützow, and *Oxford* and *Nuremberg*, by Cecil Headlam. A delightful feature of all these books is the numerous and beautiful illustrations which they contain, and the attention which they pay to art.

There are some good books dealing with special aspects of mediæval history, with individual countries, and with the spirit and the mind of the times. Among books dealing with special topics or aspects, attempting to interpret rather than

to record events, the following are worthy of note: H. A. L. Fisher's *Mediæval Empire* deals in a somewhat dry, though masterly, way with the important question of imperial administration. This book has but little of the charm which a large public has come to associate with Mr. Fisher's historical writings, a charm of which his later works possess so ample a measure. Rashdall's *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* contains an immense amount of varied and useful information about the state of knowledge in mediæval times, and describes vividly, and in a most interesting manner, the rise of the great schools of learning which then sprang up in many lands, and the famous men, such as Abelard, who taught in them. Edward Jenks's *Law and Politics in the Middle Ages* is a fascinating book dealing with some of the fundamental legal and political conceptions of the times. Equally interesting, but much more restricted in scope, is Maitland's *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*, a translation of part of a great work by the famous German publicist Gierke. Father Bede Jarrett has written a valuable work on *Socialist Theories in the Middle Ages*, as well as a smaller one, published in the People's Books series, on the same theme, and called *Mediæval Socialism*. Principal Ernest Barker has a masterly lecture on the Middle Ages in Marvin's *Unity of Western Civilization*. A book which, though old, has still the freshness stamped upon it by genius, is Guizot's *Civilization*

in Europe. R. L. Poole's *Illustrations of Mediæval Thought* will be found very useful; it is the only book of its kind in English. Oman is the author of an excellent and most important book on *The Art of War in the Middle Ages*. This is not a highly technical work designed only for the instruction of professional soldiers, but a comprehensive treatment of a big subject which is intimately related to the social and political development of all European peoples. The Crusaders are important and interesting, but, unfortunately, there is no single particularly good book on the subject. There is a small book by G. W. Cox, and a larger one by Kingsford (*Story of the Nations*); but the best thing written in English upon them is Barker's article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.¹ For monastic life there are books by Cardinal Gasquet; and for the friars, Jessop's *Coming of the Friars* is short, but delightful.

Turning our attention now to individual countries, we first deal with England. The *Political History of England* in its second, third, and fourth volumes, written respectively by Adams, Tout, and Oman, deals fully with the period, and lays a thorough foundation. Professor H. W. C. Davis's *England under the Normans and Angevins* is extremely good. Best of all is J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People*. This is neither so detailed, nor probably so accurate, as

¹ This has now been separately printed in a small volume.

some of the books we have mentioned; but it is a book in the real sense of the word and not a dreary compilation of facts. It is full of vivacity and colour, written in a clear, sparkling style. Green knew, as few have known, how to tell a story, how to paint a portrait, and how to describe an event. Unlike many books which deal with that period, it deals adequately with literature and social life, and does not confine itself to royal councils, battle-fields, and ecclesiastical affairs. The *Short History* was expanded by its author; but it may well be doubted whether the larger work is in any way an improvement upon its prototype. But if, among books on England in the Middle Ages, Green's *History* is inferior to his *Short History*, it is inferior to that alone. Mr. G. M. Trevelyan has given us a brilliant work called *England in the Age of Wycliffe*. It possesses all those qualities of style and matter which have won for its author a place with the two or three greatest historical writers of the present century. In connection with this book it would be well to read Langland's *Piers Plowman* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Oman, in his *Peasants' Revolt*, deals learnedly with a popular rising which had far-reaching social consequences. For the constitutional history of the period Stubbs's *Constitutional History of England* is the standard book; though most readers will probably prefer to read the slighter, but far more

brilliant, *Constitutional History* of Maitland. Pollock and Maitland are the joint-authors of a great *History of English Law*, in two volumes. The book carries us down to the reign of Edward I, and beyond that point the subject must be pursued in Holdsworth's *History of English Law*. Law is an enormously important subject in mediæval study and no one can hope to understand the period without paying some attention to it. Incidentally the knowledge gained by such study will make the somewhat mysterious law of Real Property which prevails in England to-day a little more intelligible to the student. The first volume of Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce* is the standard economic history of the times. Another excellent book on that subject is Ashley's *Introduction to English Economic History*, and the first part of his *Economic Organization of England*. Dr. A. L. Smith's (Master of Balliol) *Church and State in the Middle Ages* is interesting, though its scope is far more narrow than its title would lead one to suppose. On the relation between the history and the literature of the period the reader will find many good chapters in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. This monumental work lacks cohesion, but regarded as a collection of essays on various kindred literary topics it is excellent. The *Dictionary of National Biography* should be freely used : it contains first-rate work.

To study French mediæval history is not so easy for the reader who does not know French, for there is a paucity of books in English dealing with that country. But we possess a translation of Michelet's *History of France*. This takes us down to the early sixteenth century, and is undoubtedly one of the most brilliant historical works ever written. Of this book Mr. Frederic Harrison says—

“Michelet has some of the moral passion and insight into character of Tacitus, no little of the picturesque colour of Carlyle, and more than the patriotic glow of Livy. Alas! had he only something of the patient reserve of Thucydides, the simplicity and precision of Cæsar, the learning and harmonious completeness of Gibbon! He is a poet, a moralist, a preacher, rather than an historian in the modern sense of the word. Yet with all his shortcomings (and his later work has but flashes of his old force) Michelet's picture of mediæval France will long remain an indispensable book.”

And in suggesting what portions of this work are best worth reading he goes on to say—

“There are magnificent chapters on the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries; and his picture of physical France, his story of Charles the Great, of Louis the Fat, Philip Augustus, St. Louis, Philip the Fair, of the Crusaders, the Albigenses, the Communes, his chapters on Gothic architecture, on the English wars, and especially on Jeanne d'Arc, are unsurpassed in the pages of modern historical literature.”

Much of the special beauty of a writer such as Michelet of necessity evaporates in translation, and he who can should read him in French; nevertheless, even in translation enough remains of the original brilliance, colour, and eloquence to mark it out as a most remarkable book. A small, but charming, *History of France* has been written by Madame Duclaux, a scholar who has helped much to interpret French history and literature for English students. There is an interesting and extremely well-written *History of France* by Duruy, which has been translated. The best known English text-book of French history is the one by Kitchin, which has long enjoyed well-merited popularity. A concise, but dull, account will be found in Hassall's *History of France*. But perhaps the best book of all on mediæval France is Brentano's *France in the Middle Ages*, a recent and most excellent addition to the National History of France Series. If the reader's time is limited he should read first Duclaux, and after that Brentano.

In the Middle Ages there was no Italy in the political sense. The chief power belonged throughout the period to the Pope. In the south the Normans had made a settlement. In the north was the kingdom of Lombardy. There were free cities, such as Venice, Genoa, Florence, Pisa, Amalfi, and Perugia, many of which were for periods longer or shorter great States. In

addition to these there was a heterogeneous collection of duchies and principalities. Enough has already been said about the Papacy; biographies of all the more important Popes will be found in Gregorovius's *History of the City of Rome*. Many of the free cities have a separate volume assigned to them in the Mediæval Towns Series. Duffy's *Tuscan Republics* (Story of the Nations) is a fair and readable summary of the history of Genoa, Lucca, Florence, and Siena. Brown's *Venice* is undoubtedly the best account of the Queen of the Adriatic in the great days of her power. A surprisingly successful attempt has been made to accomplish the most difficult task of narrating the history of Italy as a whole in one volume in *Italy: Mediæval and Modern* by Sandford Terry, and in the *History of Italy* by Mrs. Trevelyan.

To other European countries only the barest allusion is required. Germany was included in the Empire; and Russia was outside the European pale. There is a sound and interesting *History of Spain* by Ulick Burke, and of the *Moors in Spain* by S. Lane Poole. Mediæval Hungary ought to possess a special interest for English readers, owing to the surprising similarity between her constitutional development and that of England. There is a good *History of Hungary* by Vambery. Throughout the Middle Ages, Scotland was an

independent State; so was Ireland, except for the English Pale around Dublin, and a vague supremacy claimed by the English king; so was Wales until its conquest by Edward I. Hume Brown has written a trustworthy and complete *History of Scotland*. Emily Lawless's *Ireland* (Story of the Nations) is a book full of life and charm by one who knows Ireland. An excellent little book, too, is Mrs. J. R. Green's *Irish Nationality* (Home University Library). For Wales there is a delightful volume by a great master of history, Sir Owen M. Edwards (Story of the Nations); and a most scholarly work, dealing with events down to the Edwardian conquest, by Professor J. E. Lloyd. Iceland is of peculiar interest in connection with the study of political science; and for its early history and institutions we are fortunately able to go to a masterly and illuminating essay by Bryce, published in his *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*. For the other Scandinavian countries there is an adequate sketch by Stefansson (Story of the Nations). But to understand their spirit and their civilisation in early times some of the famous Sagas should be read. There is an interesting account of Bohemia by C. E. Maurice (Story of the Nations). Between England and Bohemia there was a good deal of intercourse in the later Middle Ages; and the Protestant leanings of the

two countries from the time of Wyclif helped to draw them closer to one another. Richard II's consort was a Princess of Bohemia; and many English scholars flocked yearly to the renowned University of Prague. In her book on the Hanseatic League (*Story of the Nations*) Miss Helen Zimmern has given us a learned and interesting account of the great commercial league of German cities which attained to such enormous influence and wealth.

There are a few excellent essays by Frederic Harrison dealing with mediæval topics; and their high quality makes us wish that he had given us more. His "Bernard of Clairvaux" (in *The Choice of Books*) is a spirited and sympathetic review of Cotter Morison's *Life of St. Bernard*. "A Survey of the Thirteenth Century"; "The City"; "Constantinople as an Historic City"; and "Paris as an Historic City"—all in his *Meaning of History*—are full of learning and acute reflections.

The historians and chroniclers of the Middle Ages are uninteresting, and quite unimportant so far as the general reader is concerned. The best of them is Froissart, whose *Chronicles* has long been a popular book in this country. It deals with the hundred years of war between England and France, and gives us the most graphic contemporary picture of mediæval chivalry at its

best. Joinville's *Life of St. Louis* gives a good first-hand account of one of the greatest, as well as one of the most devout, of mediæval kings. De Commynes' *Memoirs* are attractively written, and full of useful material for the study of the growth of the French monarchy in the later Middle Ages. The *Paston Letters* may be read with both pleasure and profit; and much will be learned from them about English country life in the fifteenth century. There are *Chronicles of the Crusades* by William of Tyre and Robert the Monk, which are not quite devoid of interest. Suger, one of the ablest of mediæval statesmen, wrote a *Life of Louis the Fat*.

All these have their value; but he who would see into the very core of the mediæval mind and heart must study Dante. His great poem and his prose works taken together constitute a veritable encyclopædia of mediæval learning. In him we find embodied the entire sum of knowledge available in the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, enhanced in value by a hand which transformed into gold everything it touched. In geography and history, theology and philosophy, astronomy and physics, politics and art, Dante is equally at home. The *Divine Comedy* can best be read by English readers in Carey's verse translation. No translator of a great poet on a large scale ever succeeded in capturing more of

the true spirit of the original. A fully annotated edition is essential. The prose works, of which the *De Monarchia* is by far the most important, can be read in volumes of the Temple Classics. Books on Dante are naturally very numerous. For the historian, as distinct from the student of literature, the most useful are those by Paget Toynbee. Dean Church has also written a long and interesting essay. A great deal too may be learned from Mr. Maurice Hewlett's *The Road in Tuscany*. The thirteenth century was the Golden Age of mediæval times. It is then that we find the maturest type of ecclesiastical statesmanship, and the truest type of chivalry. Monasticism had attained its culminating point; and the great foundations, such as Fountains, Melrose, and St. Albans exerted an influence wide and beneficial. The life and example of St. Francis had produced a mighty movement, gloriously beautiful as a rainbow and equally transient, whose overwhelming emotional appeal was winning the hearts of men and inclining them towards a loftier type of character than had been exhibited by the Church in the preceding ten centuries. Mediæval knowledge had reached its highest point in the great Schoolmen. Architecture had achieved some of its finest triumphs in buildings such as the Cathedrals at Chartres, Siena, and Burgos, and the great halls of the Flemish towns. In

short, mediæval civilisation was exhausted, and could achieve no more. The rest of its history was that of steady decline, until all was transformed by the new energy of the Renaissance and Reformation.

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V *The Renaissance and the Reformation*

IT is impossible to fix a precise date for the beginning of any great movement the origin of which is not connected with the act of a particular individual. This is amply true of the Renaissance. When historians do attempt to fix a date for its beginning the widest discrepancy prevails. For some historians the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492, and the famous voyage of Vasco da Gama round the Cape of Good Hope to the East Indies in 1497, or the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, is a sufficiently early date. Others, however, would place it much farther back, even so distantly as the time of Dante. This latter view seems to be based altogether upon a confusion; it is to mistake the roots for the flowers, or rather to ignore the difference between them. No one doubts that the roots of the Renaissance stretch right back to the thirteenth century, or indeed to the remote years of classical antiquity; but a distinction must be made if the name is to serve any useful purpose at all, and it is a convenient and perfectly justifiable usage which dates the

beginning of the Renaissance not earlier than the middle of the fifteenth century, and its close not later than the accession of Charles V to the Empire in 1519. Within those seventy years are comprised all the discoveries, the inventions, and the changes which mark the transition from mediæval to modern times. What those discoveries, inventions, and changes were it will be well to notice briefly before proceeding to deal with the books which purport to explain and to describe them.

The first big change is the geographical change. Mediæval Christendom was exceedingly small in extent, comprising only the western half of Europe. The great religious schism which had divided the once united Church into Roman Catholic and Orthodox had the result of shutting out Asia Minor and the civilised Russian tribes from the common life. For commercial purposes the Mediterranean was still the important sea; and States which had the good fortune to lie upon it, such as Venice and Genoa, were the great trading States. To Venice great fleets brought, every month, the much-prized produce of the East—carpets from Persia, furs from the Caucasus, pepper and spices from the Indies. The maritime republics of Italy had their colonies at Constantinople and at other places in the Eastern Mediterranean, and there their merchants awaited the arrival of the caravans coming across

the deserts of Syria and Arabia. Venice and Genoa thus became the markets of the world; and from them goods were taken across the Alpine passes, and along the Riviera, and the great rivers such as the Danube, the Rhine, and the Elbe, to Innsbruck, Toulouse, Lyons, Nuremberg, Bruges, Maintz, Cologne, Bremen, and the other busy commercial and manufacturing towns of Europe. The difference which the geographical discoveries made was immediate and immense. Henceforth the Atlantic tended to take the place of the Mediterranean; and instantly countries like Holland and England, which hitherto had been on the remotest edge of the commercial world, were transferred to a position in the very centre. The discovery of the route to India by the Cape, coupled with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, almost annihilated the trade of the Mediterranean. It was obviously cheaper and more convenient to transport goods direct from India to London, or to Amsterdam, than to transmit them by several separate stages—by ship, packhorse, and caravan; besides which the danger from pirates and land-robbers was infinitely less. Very speedily, therefore, London and Bristol, Amsterdam and Lübeck, became great and wealthy trading cities, while Genoa and Venice gradually languished and became mere beautiful and interesting museums of the past. Several inventions of importance were also made during

the period. Gunpowder had long been in occasional use, and small cannon had formed a part of the equipment of the armies in the Hundred Years' War. But so defective was their workmanship that they could be fired only once or twice in the course of the same day, and even then with much greater risk to their own manipulators than to the enemy. Now, however, they were greatly improved, and became of real use. Smaller firearms began to be manufactured at about the same time. This latter invention had far-reaching social results, for it acted as a great leveller between rich and poor, and sealed the doom of chivalry. Henceforth the wealthy knight, completely arrayed in his case of steel, had no advantage over the yeoman in his stout leather jerkin. Bullets were no respecters of persons, and the poor man, with a gun, was a match for the greatest lord in the land. As a result of this it became the custom to employ comparatively large mercenary armies, and warfare became a serious business instead of being the rough game that it had so largely been in the Middle Ages.

There were also inventions which assisted navigation, and consequently enormously encouraged trade. Ships were improved in construction. The swift galley, rowed by two or three banks of oars, and drawing little water, was excellent for use in the calm waters of the

inland seas, but was of no use whatever for Atlantic voyages. A new kind of ship was therefore evolved, capable of weathering the most terrible gales, and of performing journeys, slowly but safely, round the world. This is the new ship which, in the perfected form which it attained through the intelligent and fostering care of the Tudor kings, enabled Drake and Frobisher to make their famous voyages and to win their famous battles, and which was to become the pattern for the future navies of England, Holland, and France. Not only were the ships themselves improved; navigation also was assisted by the invention of the mariner's compass. Hitherto vessels had seldom ventured far out of sight of land; but now that voyages to America, to India, and across the Pacific were beginning to be made, the compass was quite indispensable.

Another invention, the importance of which it would be difficult to exaggerate, was that of printing. Hitherto books had had to be laboriously copied by hand, one of them representing the whole life-work of some devoted and industrious scribe. The result was that they were few in number, and extremely dear in price. To know how to read would have been of little use in the Middle Ages to the ordinary man, for there were no books for him to read. Gutenberg of Maintz had now invented the printing-press, which, slow

and cumbrous as its processes were for many years, yet multiplied books, and so disseminated ideas, with a celerity hitherto undreamt of. A new interest in letters, and in the arts, was springing up in various parts of Europe, notably in Belgium and Italy. The less advertised Belgian Renaissance is contemporary with, and in some things precedes, that of Italy. Indeed, an interesting parallel could be worked out between Burgundy under Charles the Bold and Florence under Lorenzo the Magnificent. Belgium had its great architects, its great musicians, its great sculptors, and its great painters. Indeed it had its religious reformer, the counterpart of Savonarola, in the Carthusian monk Thomas Conecte. A host of great men, labouring in every department of culture, had raised the Netherlands, in the first half of the fifteenth century, to the very highest point of civilisation. The famous Cloth Halls and Belfries, symbols of the fierce and incessant struggle between burgher and baron, between town and castle, in the old feudal days, were giving place to the more graceful and richly ornamented Hôtels de Ville. Civic buildings, churches, and shrines were being decorated with the works of great sculptors—Hennequin, André Beauneven, and Claus Sluter. In music, Flanders was giving the lead to Italy and France in replacing the monotony of the Gregorian chant by polyphonic music. The

names of Guillaume Dufay, Giles de Binche, Jean Ockeghem, and Josquin des Prés hold a high position in the history of the art. The fact that Belgium was bilingual was a great obstacle in the way of literary progress; nevertheless von Maerlant had laid a good foundation for Flemish poetry of the future, and Jan Ruysbroeck for Flemish prose. The Burgundian authors composed in French, and many of them were celebrated—Froissart, Jean le Bel, Monstrelet, Chastellain, and Molinet. But it was in painting that Belgium at that period most clearly led the world, and formed the bridge between the Italian mediævalists—Giotto, Cimabue and others—and the great Italians of the Renaissance—Botticelli, Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, and Michael Angelo. Of the great Flemish painters the most famous were the two brothers, Jan and Hubert van Eyck, van der Weyden, and Memling.

At an earlier date Boccaccio and Petrarch had rediscovered the glories of the forgotten literatures of Greece and Rome, and had, at the same time, laid the foundation of the national literature of Italy. Florence became for fifteenth-century Europe what Athens had been in the fifth century B.C. Its autocratic rulers, Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1464) and Lorenzo de' Medici (1448-1492), were great and munificent patrons of learning, and spared no effort to induce

scholars and men of genius to settle down in the beautiful city on the Arno. At a later stage men like Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci appeared in Italy, and produced masterpieces that the world has never seen equalled. Greek began to be taught anew. A Platonic Academy was founded by Lorenzo at Florence, in which the finest products of Attic genius were reverently studied, and sedulously imitated.

A pronounced political change was also taking place in these years. The authority of the Pope in secular matters was being mildly challenged; while the suzerainty of the Emperor was absolutely repudiated in all save name. The Middle Ages had thought of Christendom as one united whole, in which sovereignty was undivided, and rested, on its secular side, in the Emperor, and on its ecclesiastical side in the Pope. Even the duality was repugnant to the thought of the times, and efforts were incessant to prove the superiority of Pope to Emperor, or of Emperor to Pope. Kings and bishops derived their authority from these higher potentates. Now, however, the national consciousness had been roused, and complete independence for the several States was being claimed. Writers like Machiavelli were inculcating a new kind of statecraft. Each State was now deemed to be sovereign and independent within its own territory,

and entirely without obligation towards its neighbours. At the head of each such State was a sovereign ruler, deriving his authority neither from the Pope nor from the Emperor, but direct from God. "The new Messiah was the King," as a French historian has said. The unifying process went on apace; and the many societies, corporations, and guilds, religious and secular, of a semi-autonomous nature which had existed within the mediæval States were ruthlessly suppressed. This, on its political side, was the meaning of the Reformation—the Pope being in the nature of an external rival was repudiated; likewise the monastery, being something in the nature of an *imperium in imperio*, was suppressed. This movement, apparent in all the Western European countries, was not carried out to the like extent within them all. In Spain it took the form of uniting the smaller kingdoms, such as Castile and Aragon, in one strong national State, and in expelling the Moors; but the authority of the Pope was not repudiated. In France the great feudatories, who had been as powerful as the king himself in mediæval times, had been cowed by Louis XI, and the monarch became the undisputed master of the country. The authority of the Pope remained, for a hundred years, in the balance. The Reformation in France, although ultimately it failed to win to the Pro-

testant faith the majority of Frenchmen, was more promising in its beginnings than the movement in any other land. In Germany it was associated with the tyranny of class over class. In Geneva and in Scotland it was associated with a hard intellectualism and a somewhat harsh Puritanism which, although not impairing its permanent value, did certainly diminish its charm. In England it was associated with Tudor opportunism, with royal lust, and aristocratic greed. But in France it suffered from none of these ugly disfigurements. The early French Protestant leaders were as spiritual and as lovable a body of people as have ever led a religious movement—the eloquent and warm-hearted Guillaume Farel, the learned Lefèvre, that sweetest of hymn-writers, Marguerite de Valois, sister of King Francis I, Clement Marot the Court poet, Pavannes and Roussel. But they failed. Many of them perished at the stake, while others became exiles in foreign lands. The Popes were wiser in their dealings with the French kings than they had been in their dealings with the Tudor sovereigns; and an arrangement was arrived at whereby the authority of Rome was openly acknowledged, while the Gallican Church became in fact almost independent. The political Reformation reached its highest point in England, in Sweden, and in Holland,

and in some of the German principalities and free cities. In all these every vestige of external authority was swept away.

The study of the Renaissance and of the Reformation might be begun with the perusal of Frederic Seebohm's excellent little volume, *The Era of the Protestant Revolution* (Epochs of Modern History). This deals in quite masterly fashion with the two twin movements, from the beginning down to the outbreak of the wars of religion in the closing years of the sixteenth century. It is very far from being a bare record of events, or a dry reference to persons. On the contrary it brings out clearly the important tendencies of the times, examines causes, and describes results. Of course it is only a short sketch, and the outline which it supplies will have to be filled in by the aid of larger works; but so far as it goes it is a model of what such a book ought to be. A larger text-book covering the period is Johnson's *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*. This is scholarly, and well arranged, and will be read with pleasure as well as profit. The first volume of the *Cambridge Modern History* is devoted exclusively to the Renaissance. As this is our first mention of this great work, a word or two must be said about it. The idea of having a complete History of Europe, beginning with the Renaissance, and coming down to the close of the nineteenth century, originated with

Lord Acton, when Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. In his opinion historical materials had accumulated to such an enormous extent that no single man could any longer possibly write with authority upon a long period. Consequently the work was to be divided among a large number of specialists, and their work co-ordinated by a supervising editorial board. Acton did not live to see the publication of even the first of the twelve volumes; and the editorial work was performed by A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero, and Stanley Leathes. *The Cambridge Modern History* has all the merits and all the defects of the *Cambridge Mediæval History*, of which it was the prototype, and with these we have already sufficiently dealt. But with all its faults, its impartiality, its unimpeachable accuracy, and the concise way in which it sums up all that is known about a given subject, make it an absolutely indispensable book for the student of modern history. The first volume contains some admirable chapters, among which the following may be specially recommended: "The Age of Discovery," by E. J. Payne; two chapters on Florence, the one by Armstrong, the other by Burd; "Venice," by Horatio Brown; "Germany and the Empire," by T. F. Tout; "France," by Stanley Leathes; "Economic Change," by Cunningham; "The Classical Renaissance," by Richard Jebb; "The Christian

Renaissance," by M. R. James; and "Catholic Europe," by William Barry.

For the Renaissance on its cultured side, the following are the most important and interesting books: Burckhardt's *Italian Renaissance* gives an excellent account of the new learning, more especially as it reflected itself in the poetry, the painting, the sculpture, and the architecture of Italy. John Addington Symonds has written several works about the period, the best known of which is his *Renaissance in Italy*. Symonds was not only a learned historian but an acute critic of literature and art, and a writer of very considerable ability and charm. His numerous books are a rich treasure store of Renaissance learning. Equally fascinating is Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers*. This book, which has the advantage of being in a single volume of no great bulk, gives a charming account of the interesting and amiable group of scholars—Erasmus, Thomas More, and Colet—who brought the light of the new learning to England. It is the biography of a literary circle. The influence of Italy upon English thought at the time was enormous. Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's great agent in working out the Reformation settlement, was said always to carry a copy of Machiavelli's *Prince* in his pocket; and it is known that he financed the publication of an English edition of

the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsiglio of Padua, the great mediæval Anti-Papal writer.

Florence as the centre of the best intellectual life of the period is deserving of special attention; and there are books enough, and good ones, which deal with her history. Two of these, in spite of their great length, ought certainly to be read; for they are not merely the history of a city during a troubled period, but the culture-annals of Western Europe during one of the greatest epochs in its history. These books are Villari's *Life and Times of Savonarola* and his *Life and Times of Machiavelli*. Villari is one of the greatest of all modern Italian historians, a man of immense learning, and of considerable literary gifts. Between them these two volumes present a complete view of Italian life and thought in the late fifteenth, and early sixteenth, century. There are interesting biographies of the two most famous of the Medici family who ruled Florence. One is the *Life of Cosimo de' Medici*, by Miss E. K. Ewart (Foreign Statesmen Series). Of Lorenzo de' Medici there are two good *Lives*, an old one by Roscoe which has by no means lost its interest and value, and a thoroughly modern one by Edward Armstrong. Vassari *Lives of the Italian Painters* contains short biographies of all the great Italian leaders of art.

The reader who has read Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers* will already know a good deal about Erasmus; and it is desirable that much should be known, for Erasmus is the typical man-of-letters of the age. We are fortunate in possessing a brilliant biography of him by J. A. Froude, a book of never-failing interest and delight. It contains a large number of Erasmus's delightful letters, and supplies a graphic description of the Renaissance and early Reformation as they appeared in the northern countries—France, the Netherlands, England, and Switzerland.

Three lectures by Lord Acton, and contained in his *Lectures on Modern History*, are of considerable importance. Acton was a man of prodigious learning and great judgment, but one whose literary output was small. However, the little he did leave is of sovereign value, and these three lectures on "The Beginning of the Modern State," "The New World," and "The Renaissance" are all masterpieces. But indeed the whole volume of lectures, which covers the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, should be read.

Lord Morley has given us two brilliant and weighty pieces of writing dealing with this period. The first is his Romanes Lecture, on Machiavelli. Much has been written, both by way of condemnation and by way of exculpation or extenuation, about this famous man. Most

readers gather their impressions from Macaulay's celebrated essay, an essay which seizes upon all that was external and picturesque in the subject, but neglects the enduring problem which it presents. Morley, on the other hand, focused his whole attention upon the great challenge which Machiavelli flung at the feet of statesmen, particularly the new order of statesmen who were then coming into existence. The question is, he says, whether the State is above all the ordinary rules of morality, and whether the only criterion of good statesmanship is success! Machiavelli was the first to ask the question plainly and bluntly; but once asked, it has remained with us ever since. It reappears in the political writings of German publicists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and their view appears to coincide with that of Machiavelli, that in statecraft necessity knows no law, and might is always right. Lord Morley adopts the opposite view, arguing that civilisation is dependent upon the recognition by States of rights inherent in other States, and consequently of duties in themselves. Nowhere in all literature is the question so ably discussed as in this Romanes Lecture. Morley's other piece is a most interesting essay on Guicciardini, the famous Florentine historian, about the merit of whose works such diverse opinions have been held. Guicciardini, like Machiavelli, was a typical

figure of the Italian Renaissance, and his life and work deserve careful study.

Two interesting biographies give an account of some of the maritime enterprises of the day. One is the *Life of Prince Henry the Navigator*, by C. R. Beazley (Heroes of the Nations). It is the account of a life of thrilling interest, of adventure and discovery. The other is Washington Irving's *Life of Christopher Columbus*. Few stories in the whole of history are so noble and so inspiring as that of this sailor, full of faith in his mission, caring nothing for danger or for present reward, who by his unfaltering resolution opened for Europe a path across the Atlantic, and by so doing altered the whole course of human affairs.

It was from Genoa that Columbus set forth on his lonely and perilous voyage, and his statue is one of the first sights that greets the traveller upon his arrival in the "Superb City." But it was Spain that profited by his discovery. From being a miscellaneous aggregation of independent kingdoms and principalities, Spain was rapidly coming to the front as one of the strongest and most completely united kingdoms in Europe. In the later fifteenth century Ferdinand of Aragon had married Isabella of Castile, and the one independent kingdoms had been welded into two. There remained the independent kingdom of Portugal to the west, and the great Moorish

settlement in the south. Religious fanaticism and political ambitions, determined the Spanish to expel the Moors. The account of the struggle is an interesting one, and has been admirably told by Washington Irving in his *Conquest of Granada*, and by Prescott in his *Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*. The upshot of it was that the Moorish State was completely destroyed; and the famous centres of culture—Cordova, Granada, and Seville—fell into Christian hands. Spain was now powerful enough to make use of the discoveries of Columbus and the other sailors who speedily followed in his track; and for intercourse with the New World her geographical position admirably adapted her. In a surprisingly short length of time Mexico and Peru had been conquered; and the gold and silver mines of Central and South America were pouring their wealth into Spanish coffers. Moreover Spain, in virtue of these discoveries and conquests, was laying claim to the whole of America, both North and South; and this claim was sanctioned by the Pope, except for a section of the east of South America which was awarded to Portugal. Henceforward trespassers were to be warned off; and not until the destruction of the Great Armada in 1588 had checked the overweening might of Spain, and the revolt of the Netherlands had diminished her resources, was it possible for other countries to found colonies

in the unappropriated lands of North America. When the Spaniards went to Mexico and Peru they found there an ancient but decayed civilisation; and the story of the conquest is full of romantic interest. It has been admirably told in what are now historical classics—Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico* and *Conquest of Peru*. They are tales of adventure as thrilling and as fascinating as ever schoolboy devoured.

From Ferdinand and Isabella the Spanish sceptre passed into the hands of Charles V, who was not only King of Spain, and as such lord of the New World, but also Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and ruler of the Netherlands. He ruled throughout the first half of the sixteenth century, and he is the greatest political figure of the age. He was a truly great man, who had fully learnt the new ideas of statecraft of the period; and it was fortunate that, when the Reformation movement swept over Europe, the chief power was in such wise and able keeping. The history of his long reign has been excellently told by Mr. E. Armstrong in his *Charles V*.

England, like other countries, was fully alive to the new movement, both in secular culture, in politics, and in religion. The period of anarchy known as the Wars of the Roses had ended with the triumph of Henry VII at Bosworth; and throughout the period of transition from medi-

æval to modern times that astute but prosaic Welshman was on the throne. Henry was one of the ablest of our kings, and to none are we more indebted. His welcome to the foreign scholars who brought the new learning was cordial, if somewhat penurious; and his stern suppression of disintegrating feudal tendencies, his judicious alliances, his enlightened interest in trade, and his care of the navy, started the country upon the most brilliant period in the whole of its long history. Henry was neither a picturesque nor an amiable character, and he has consequently suffered neglect at the hands of the historians. Bacon dismisses him with a few paragraphs; and even Green seems hardly to have discerned his real greatness. Now, however, he is at last coming into his own, and winning the recognition and praise which he deserves. The reader should read his *Life*, by James Gairdner (*Twelve English Statesmen*), and the brilliant account of his reign by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher in the fifth volume of the *Political History of England*.

Of Wolsey there is a good *Life* by Bishop Creighton. It is, perhaps, a little too eulogistic, and a little too ready to take diplomatic finesse for true statesmanship. Wolsey is a mediæval rather than a modern figure, the last of the ecclesiastical statesmen; and as such he was behind the times, and a brake upon the wheel

of progress. A charming and intimate account of his private life has been written by Cavendish.

At this time the foundations of modern historiography were laid by Polydore Vergil in his *Historia Anglica*. This, however, is only of interest to students of sources, and to those who wish to trace the development of the art of history writing. A much more interesting and valuable contemporary book is Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*. By the implied contrast between the actual conditions in which he dwelt and those prevailing in the ideal State which he describes, More throws a flood of light upon social life in early Tudor times. Similarly for ordinary every-day life in the Italy of the period, Benvenuto Cellini's *Autobiography* is invaluable.

The Renaissance and the Reformation overlap; and the former was, of course, one of the chief causes of the latter. It is just as difficult to give a precise date for the beginning of the Reformation as it is to give one for the beginning of the Renaissance. Some writers point to Wyclif's heresies; others go back to the Albigenses, and maintain that heterodoxy existed continuously in Europe for three hundred years, and was only helped to a more vigorous and outspoken life by certain political tendencies of the sixteenth century. Others, again, looking only at the political aspect of the Reformation, and seeing in it only a desire on the part of

national rulers to be quit of the Pope, have called the statutes of Provisors and Præmunire of 1351 and 1353 "twin morning stars of the Reformation." In this case again, as in that of the Renaissance, surely nothing but confusion can arise from the assigning of so early a date for the commencement of the movement itself; though, of course, no one would deny that its roots do stretch back some centuries (back to the time of St. Paul, Luther would say). For all practical purposes the Reformation begins with the nailing of his ninety-five theses, against Papal Indulgences, by Luther to the church door at Wittenberg, on All Saints' Day, 1517. Throughout the Reformation religious and political motives are inextricably interwoven. There are clever and ambitious kings desiring to increase their power at the expense of the Pope and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. There are patriotic statesmen, with a secular outlook, who desire to aggrandise their own nation at the expense of its foreign rivals. There are conscientious and fanatical persons, of all grades of society from emperors and cardinals down to the merest peasants, who believe that eternal salvation is bound up with adherence to their own particular body of doctrine. But in all Protestant lands, beneath the intrigues and the statecraft, the selfish motives and the patriotic movements, there runs a great stream of genuine public feeling, stirred to the very depths by

clerical incompetence, greed, sensuality, tyranny, and obscurantism, minds awakened to the importance of private judgment, and hearts touched by the sublime ideals of brotherhood. Without this body of opinion to back them, temporal rulers could never have prevailed against the Catholic Church. What they did was to sound it, to direct it, and to utilise it.

The triumphs of the Reformation were, for the most part, swift and permanent. Within less than half a century from the commencement of the movement the religious destiny of every European State had been determined. Those lands which adopted the Reformed Faith, in one of its several varieties, did so immediately; and there were no later converts. England, Scotland, the Dutch Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, Germany north of the Main, and several of the Swiss cantons, became Protestant. Italy, Spain, Portugal, Flanders, Austria and Southern Germany, remained Catholic. The position of France remained long in doubt. Curiously enough, the "Most Christian Kings" were just the kings who attached least importance to doctrinal distinctions. For the most part, Frenchmen were Frenchmen first and Catholics afterwards. In the greatest French king of the period, Henry of Navarre, and in the great Cardinal Richelieu, who was the heir to his policy, France possessed rulers who were

essentially politicians, and who looked at every question, including religion, from the secular point of view. For them two matters only were of supreme importance: (1) to preserve French national unity, and prevent the division of the nation into two religious factions, with the consequent weakening of its collective effect; (2) to check the increasing power of the hated Hapsburgs. In furtherance of this policy we find the Protestant champion, Henry of Navarre, abandoning his creed, with the light-hearted assertion that "Paris is worth a Mass"; while Cardinal Richelieu allied himself with Protestant countries to fight the "Most Catholic King." Not that there were no genuinely religious people in France. On the contrary, there was a devoted Catholic party, and, as we have already seen, there was also a strong Protestant party; and it looked at one time as if the majority of French people would adopt the reformed faith. John Calvin, be it remembered, the greatest mind of the whole period, was himself the product of the French Reformation. But the astuteness of the French rulers, and the concessions of successive Popes, when torrents of blood had been shed in civil war, preserved France as a whole for the Church. There was no dangerous schism, and Protestantism in France became an ever-declining force.

In Italy and Spain the new doctrine had but

a precarious foothold. Heretics were of the high-born and cultured classes; and the mass of the people remained almost untouched. This notwithstanding, the Inquisition in Spain set to work to stamp out, in blood and fire, all traces of heresy; and the complete success of this policy is sufficient proof of the fact that persecution may succeed in its aim, provided it is started sufficiently early, and is sufficiently thorough. Of the orthodoxy of Austria, Flanders, the South German States, and Poland, there was never any question. Equally certain and emphatic was the Protestant attitude of the Scandinavian countries, of the North German States, of Scotland, of Berne and Zürich, and of Geneva.

The position of England was more problematical. At various periods in her past history she had shown a certain amount of insular independence in the face of Papal pretensions and exactions. A jealous eye was kept upon tribute which found its way into Roman coffers, and sometimes thence (so it was suspected) into those of the hereditary foe, France. An equally jealous eye was kept upon the right of the Pope to appoint to English benefices. An appeal from the English secular courts to the Pope was regarded as a heinous offence, to be punished with confiscation and life-long incarceration. Then again, in matters of doctrine, Wyclif through his English Bible, through his pamphlets,

and through his preaching and his "poor priests," had disposed many minds to accept novel and revolutionary teaching. Lollardy had been suppressed, so far as the Government could do it, but the tradition remained; and it is doubtful whether the heresy was altogether extinct, in the remote corners of Buckinghamshire, when the trumpet-call of Luther awakened it to a new life.

King Henry VIII, in the early years of his reign, had posed as the champion of Catholicism. He had written against Luther, and won from the Pope the proud title of "Defender of the Faith." This was the period of Wolsey's ascendancy; and Wolsey, enjoying as he did the unique distinction for an English archbishop of being Papal Legate *a latere*, was practically Pope in England. But after the fall of Wolsey new influences began to work upon Henry. He desired a male heir to inherit his power, and this could only be brought about by annulling the marriage between him and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, an annulment which the Pope was unable, for personal reasons, to allow. The king's masterful disposition, however, would brook no opposition; and his determination was strengthened by his adulterous passion for Anne Boleyn. He decided to establish a royal despotism by putting himself at the head of the strong national Anti-Papal party. He was aided

and abetted by sturdy patriots who hated submission to an Italian priest, and who loathed the foreign Papal nominees who, for years, held the episcopal sees of Worcester and Salisbury; by courtiers greedy of gain, who cast covetous eyes upon the broad acres of the monks; and by the growing mercantile interest, who resented the Pope's division of the New World and the East Indies between Portugal and Spain. After a long struggle, interspersed with some temporary lapses, the triumph of Protestantism was assured, and its safety made certain after the great duel with Spain. A few noble Englishmen, like Thomas More and Bishop Fisher, opposed the royal will, and paid for their opposition with their lives. Others, like Cranmer, more politicians than saints, vacillated, then acquiesced.

While the Reformation was in full progress the Counter-Reformation was launched. There were thousands of people within the Church eager to reform its abuses, while preserving its creeds and organisation intact. From 1545 to 1555 a Council, representing the whole Catholic Church, met at Trent. It reorganised what was left of Christendom, attempted to reform morals, and drew up a more rigid definition of orthodoxy. New and militant religious orders were established, and a vigorous offensive was opened against the enemies of the Faith. Henceforth Europe was divided into two mutually antagonistic religious

camp, separated by a sharp line of demarcation. The new orders, such as the Jesuits and the Capuchins, went forth on their missions of conversion; while the Inquisition was set up in all Catholic countries. Religious and political movements were intermingled in the revolts, rebellions, and the wars which then broke out, and which lasted, with hardly any interruption, until the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

The old and popular *History of the Reformation* by Merle d'Aubigné is a book for the edification of Protestants rather than for the instruction of impartial students. Similarly Lingard's famous *History of England* is a defence of Catholicism. Both works have been left far behind by modern scholarship. As a short text-book, covering the whole ground, Seebohm's *Era of the Protestant Reformation* will be found extremely useful. But its brevity renders it inadequate for the study of one of the most momentous periods in the annals of mankind. The best book, undoubtedly, is Lindsay's masterly *History of the Reformation*. It is in two volumes, one dealing exclusively with England, the other with the Continent. The second volume of the *Cambridge Modern History* contains several excellent chapters, among which the following may be specially mentioned: "Luther," by Lindsay; "Calvin and the Reformed Church," by Fairbairn; "The Anglican Settlement," by Maitland; "The Church and Reform,"

by R. V. Laurence; and "Tendencies of European Thought," by Fairbairn. In the fourth volume of the same work the following chapters are deserving of attention: "French Humanism," by Tilley; "William the Silent" and "The Dutch Republic," by Edmundson; "Mary Stewart," by T. G. Law; "The Elizabethan Age," by Sidney Lee; "The End of the Italian Renaissance," by A. J. Butler; "Henry IV," by Stanley Leathes; and "Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century," by J. N. Figgis.

But the Reformation is a movement which has stirred the hearts and roused the emotions of men, and the result is that there are works dealing with it which rise far above the level of even the most perfect text-books. One such book is Leopold von Ranke's *History of the Popes*. Few English people, perhaps, read this book, though most are acquainted with it through one of the most celebrated of Macaulay's Essays. Undoubtedly Ranke was one of the dozen best historians of the last century, and this is one of his best books. It lacks animation and colour, but is always interesting; it gives a masterly account of the Papacy during the greatest crisis of its history. From the standpoint of an English Churchman, the tale is admirably told by Bishop Creighton in his *History of the Papacy*. This is a most scholarly work, and not wanting in artistic merit; but its obvious striving after almost

superhuman impartiality leaves the reader with an impression of cold detachment not altogether pleasant. It is easy to adore, or to hate, Luther; but in order to regard him only with scientific interest one has to be something less than man.

For the Reformation in Germany, the best book is Ranke's *History of the Reformation in Germany*. This is a truly great work. Even the cautious scientific historian is stirred into life by events which he narrates; and the great figures of its drama move across a stage admirably set by a master hand. It is a long book, but abounding in unfailing interest. In Armstrong's *Charles V*, to which reference has already been made, the reader will find a full account of the political side of the Reformation in Germany. For the Peasants' War and Humanism in Germany, there is a good book by E. B. Bax, entitled *The Peasants' War in Germany*, and a *Life of Ulrich von Hutten* by D. F. Strauss. One of the most brilliant pictures of the period ever painted in short compass is Froude's "Times of Erasmus and Luther" (*Short Studies on Great Subjects*, Vol. I). This is not only excellent history, but a magnificent example of exquisite English prose. Biographies of Martin Luther are, as we should expect, plentiful. In Germany, and indeed in other countries as well, whole libraries have accumulated about his name. For, whether we love him or detest him, we are obliged to admit that he is one of the world's

most arresting figures. After reading what is contained about him in the general histories, the reader might take up Carlyle's penetrating and admiring study in *Heroes and Hero Worship*. Probably the best biography is that of Köstlin. But no one ought to rest content without coming face to face with this strong, rugged, and tender-hearted man in his own delightful *Autobiography* and *Table Talk*. The latter is easily accessible to English readers in the versions translated and edited by William Hazlitt. The *Autobiography* also has been translated by Hazlitt, from the French of Michelet.

The only other countries for which it is necessary to turn to special books on the Reformation are the Netherlands, Switzerland, and England.

Prior to the Reformation, the Netherlands were merely an appanage of the Spanish Crown. At its close, the southern provinces remained true to their allegiance; but the northern provinces, after a struggle the heroic qualities of which are unsurpassed, had won independence for themselves and become the United Netherlands, or the Dutch Republic. The story of the stirring fight for independence and liberty has been told by Motley in his *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, one of the greatest historical works ever written, and one which is likely to endure as long as the English language itself. The tale is continued in the same author's excellent, though less famous, *History*

of the *United Netherlands*. The great hero of the struggle was William the Silent; and the story of his life has been told, with his usual learning and charm, by Frederic Harrison. Motley, carried away by his Protestant and Orange enthusiasm, is somewhat unfair to the southern provinces and cities which were, two hundred and fifty years later, to constitute the kingdom of Belgium. An able and sympathetic treatment of their history will be found in Emile Cammaerts' *Belgium* (Story of the Nations).

There was, of course, no Swiss State in the sixteenth century, nor for long afterwards. When the Reformation swept upon its first victorious course, the French Cantons, with Lucerne at their head, remained steadfast in the old faith. But Berne became Protestant. So also did Zürich, under the leadership of Zwingli, the most lovable of the Protestant leaders of that generation. At the University of Basel Erasmus taught, and when he died he was buried there in the old Cathedral, whose rocky foundation is washed by the waters of the Rhine. But it was Geneva, through its associations with Calvin, that became for many years the rival of Rome as the religious metropolis of Europe. Calvin lacked the warm impulses of Luther, and the sweet temperament of Zwingli; but in intellect and statesmanship he excelled all the Protestant leaders of that age. A great scholar and thinker, he

was also a man of affairs, who believed that the triumph of the religious principles for which he stood was bound up with international politics. He lived in an age in which the extinction of political liberty was threatened. In some countries Catholic sovereigns were making themselves absolute, and in other lands Protestant sovereigns were doing precisely the same thing. To this movement Calvin opposed the belief in the sanctity of private judgment, and the republican ideal; and by so doing he performed an estimable service for mankind. Indeed, Lord Morley, who would be the last person anyone would suspect of having sympathy with Calvin's theological views, has definitely declared that Calvin "saved Europe in the sixteenth century." John Knox, the greatest figure in the Scottish Reformation, was his avowed disciple; and Calvin was, indeed, the inspirer of the Puritan movement in England which won for Parliament its supremacy over the Stuarts in the seventeenth century.

For the general history of the Reformation in Switzerland the ordinary books, such as Lindsay's, will suffice. There are some good chapters in Hug and Stead's *Switzerland* (Story of the Nations), and in the recent scholarly work, *The History of Switzerland*, by Professor Oechsli of Zürich. A great deal has been written about Calvin, but there is no single biography of out-

standing merit. The best, perhaps, is *The Life and Times of Calvin* by the Dutch scholar Penning. It has been translated into English by B. S. Berrington, and is altogether a most readable and instructive book. A penetrating study of Calvin will be found in the volume of Professor Menzies's essays, edited by Sir Henry Jones. There is a badly written, but learned, study of Calvin by A. M. Hunter. But for terseness, learning, and brilliant insight, nothing can compare with Dr. Fairbairn's chapter on Calvin in the second volume of the *Cambridge Modern History*.

The period of the Reformation in England is one of the best known in our whole history. It so happened that the throne was occupied by the Tudors, the most brilliant and the most able set of rulers that have ever held sway in this island. The masterly constructive statecraft of Henry VII, the dashing, relentless, and consummate statesmanship of Henry VIII, and the magnificent and inspiring leadership of Elizabeth, raised the country, in a hundred years, from being a mere European backwater, to a foremost position among great States. In the world of action, it was the age of Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, Raleigh, and Richard Grenville, men whose names ever since have stood for daring exploits in the service of their country. In literature, it was the age of Shakespeare, Bacon, Jonson, Sidney, and

Marlowe. With such sovereigns on the throne there was not much room for statesmen to display their genius; but the Cecils and Walsingham were models of what able and industrious civil servants ought to be.

For this period the supreme book is, of course, James Anthony Froude's *History of England from Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*. It is in twelve volumes; but to say that it is as interesting and as exciting as a novel would be but faint praise. Froude ranks with Gibbon, Macaulay, and Motley—the four greatest historians who have used the English tongue; and as a simple narrator he excels the other three. Indeed, he is probably the world's supreme master of the narrator's art. No other writer of English, unless it perhaps be Thackeray, has had at his command, a style so absolutely pure and easy, and yet one which is capable of attaining the sublime heights of eloquence. Were all else to be forgotten, some of the descriptive passages in the *History* will continue to be read with delight and admiration so long as the English tongue itself endures. Although the book opens in the middle of one reign and closes in the middle of another, the dramatic unity is, nevertheless, perfect; for Froude conceived the period 1529–1588 as a mighty duel between Catholicism and Protestantism, in which Spain on the one hand and England on the other were the protagonists. This

duel fitly opens with the fall of Wolsey, the last of the mediæval ecclesiastical statesmen, and ends no less fitly with the destruction of the Spanish Armada. The twelve volumes contain a numerous and wonderful collection of portraits and character-sketches, painted sometimes unfairly, but always with graphic power. Froude makes no attempt to be impartial; or perhaps, as he himself would say, he had examined all the available evidence, and having come to the conclusion that one side was overwhelmingly in the wrong, like a judge he delivers judgment. That he was indefatigable in his researches, no one has ever denied; but it is equally true that he has allowed a large number of inaccuracies to slip unto his work. Nevertheless, while open to criticism on many points of detail, the value of the *History* as a whole remains unimpaired. If Froude was unfair, it was with the unfairness of all great historians—as Gibbon was to the Fathers, as Mommsen was to the Republicans, as Macaulay was to the Tories, and as Motley was to the Catholic Netherlands. He hated Catholics in general, and Jesuits in particular. He appears to gloat over their misfortunes in England. He was a great patriot; and no one has ever rejoiced with more unfeigned joy over the smiting of the Amalekites and all the enemies of the Protestant cause.

In addition to this *History*, Froude also pub-

lished a volume of *Lectures on the Council of Trent*. Froude could make even the duller of affairs interesting, and his account of the years of squabbling, and of the issuing of the reactionary programme from the pretty old archiepiscopal city between the Brenner and the Lago di Garda, is as exciting as any tale of battle told by Sir Walter Scott. There are three other books by Froude, in addition to the *Life of Erasmus*, dealing with the period which we know so well. The first is *The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon*, an interesting work, though of no great importance. The second is *The Spanish Story of the Armada*, a short essay which has given its name to the whole collection. The third is *English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century*, a fascinating series of biographical sketches.

A book dealing with the Tudor period which no wise man will neglect is Sir Sidney Lee's *Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century*. The author has been known as a past-master in the art of writing short biographies ever since the day when he took over the editorship of the *Dictionary of National Biography* from Leslie Stephen's failing hand. He is also known by his larger biographies, a standard *Life of Shakespeare*, and a *Life of Queen Victoria*. The little volume in question contains an admirable chapter on the following subjects: "The Spirit of the Sixteenth Century"; "Sir Thomas More"; "Sir Philip

Sidney"; "Sir Walter Raleigh"; "Edmund Spenser"; "Francis Bacon"; "Shakespeare's Career"; and "Foreign Influence on Shakespeare." It is a book which every lover of good history and good literature ought to read.

There are several interesting biographies of prominent men of the period. Of outstanding importance is Professor Pollard's *Henry VIII*. This is an exceptionally brilliant book, based upon an unrivalled knowledge of the period. In view of all that has been written by a whole generation of Froude's detractors, it is interesting to find that the verdict of this last word in scholarship is, on the whole, not very different from his. The method of treatment, however, is quite dissimilar; for where Froude is content to describe and extol, Pollard explains and analyses. He is satisfied that Henry was a very great statesman; great because he reflected in his policy the living and progressive thought of the England which he governed. Of scarcely inferior merit or importance is Pollard's *Life of Cranmer*. Around Cranmer great controversies have raged. To many (including Macaulay) he was only a mean coward, who sent conscientious and brave men to the stake, but himself shrank and recanted when a turn of the political wheel put him in peril. To others he appears simply as the saintly author of much that is beautiful in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Pollard,

however, takes neither of these views, but treats Cranmer as a typical product of the political philosophy of the age, neither better nor worse than others whose only firm principle was a belief in the necessity for individual sovereignty and national unity. A third interesting book by Professor Pollard is his *Protector Somerset*, a study of an unfortunate statesman who was much ahead of the opinions of his own time.

Much may be learnt about the private life of Queen Elizabeth from the old works of Agnes Strickland. A useful and judicious political sketch is E. S. Beesly's *Queen Elizabeth* (Twelve English Statesmen). Of the great naval hero, Drake, there is an excellent short biography by Julian Corbett (English Men of Action).

The fifth and sixth volumes of the *Political History of England*, the one by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, the other by Professor Pollard, cover, in considerable detail, the whole period from the accession of Henry VII to the death of Elizabeth. The names of these two historians are sufficient guarantee of first-rate scholarship and brilliant treatment. No better text-books have ever been written.

From this point in our history down to the close of the eighteenth century, we shall be able to cite Macaulay's *Essays* from time to time. No book, except the Bible or Shakespeare, is better known in English-speaking communities; and it would be waste of time to descant at any length upon its

merits. From the first day of publication, its wide and profound learning, trenchant criticisms, its amazing vitality, its brilliant style, and, not least, its frequent "purple patches," won for it a great place, not only on the shelf, but in the memory, of every lover of literature. Three only of the *Essays*—"Burghley and his Times," "Hallam's Constitutional History," and "Bacon"—deal with the Tudor period. They are not among the best Macaulay wrote, but they exhibit all the merits and the defects of their author. The most valuable is the one on Hallam. Following his usual method, Macaulay says comparatively little about the book he is reviewing, but plunges into an investigation of the subject on his own account. It is a brilliant, though not very profound, introduction to the study of the sixteenth and seventeenth century constitutional history.

On the political theory of the sixteenth century by far the best work is J. N. Figgis's *From Gerson to Grotius*. We have only just ceased to mourn the untimely death of Father Figgis, who was one of the most notable of our younger historians. No other English writer, except perhaps Maitland, has succeeded so well in making the history of ideas as interesting as that of persons.

Up to this point no historical novel has been mentioned at all. Indeed, the value of such works as aids to the study of history is extremely

doubtful. To reproduce the "atmosphere" of a particular period is doubtless good; but to do so is one of the most difficult tasks imaginable; and as a rule can only be accomplished by the reader steeping himself in the contemporary literature of the period he is studying—its novels, its plays, its essays, its diaries, and its letters. But Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* is so excellent in its rendering of the English spirit of adventure that only the stupidest of pedants would fail to recommend it. *Westward Ho!* however, is one of a very small class of books, a class to which others should be added with extreme caution.

THE period which lies between the close of the Reformation and the outbreak of the French Revolution is somewhat confused and lacking in unity. The old conception of Christendom as forming one undividable whole had been shattered. Sovereign States had come into being; and henceforward each of them went its own way, aggrandising itself, whenever possible, at the expense of its neighbours. The first task which confronted every nation was to recover from the devastating civil and religious wars, and to fix the lines of their future constitutional development. Thus, throughout the seventeenth century, and to some extent in the eighteenth century as well, England is engrossed by the new struggle, first between the King and the Law, and later between the King and Parliament. In France, during the same time, we witness the extinction of democratic self-government, and the culmination of the French monarchy under Louis XIV. Spain was steadily declining throughout the period, and before the close of the eighteenth century had sunk into a condition of complete political

stagnation, and even imbecility. As Spain declined Holland rose, becoming for a brief while the greatest naval, and one of the greatest colonial, Powers in the world. Into her hands fell the Portuguese possessions in the East, and also the Cape of Good Hope. Within the Empire disintegration was proceeding steadily; but out of the welter of conflicting principalities and cities two States—Austria and Prussia—were winning pre-eminence for themselves. For a time Sweden, under able and ambitious kings like Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII, played a vigorous and brilliant part in European concerns. But this display of energy was transient only, and none of the Scandinavian countries succeeded in winning a permanent place in the narrow circle of Great Powers. Poland, which had retained a Catholic governing class, and with a constitution which was an impossible mixture of despotism and licence, was racing down the road to anarchy and dismemberment. To the east of Poland and Austria the immense territories ruled over by the Czar of All the Russias, a country which until then had been definitely Oriental and largely barbarous, were, in the hands of enlightened rulers like Peter the Great, gradually putting on the outward aspect of Western civilisation, and aspiring to play an important part in the affairs of the nations. Turkey, which had at one time held the whole

of Hungary, and had only been checked at the very gates of Vienna itself, had now become not so much a State to be feared as a "Question" to be discussed by covetous neighbours.

During the whole of these two hundred years countries were carved and allotted according to the fortunes of war at the moment. Cities and peoples were handed about from one victorious State to another without the slightest thought being given to the feelings and rights of the inhabitants themselves. It was a dark age for nationality throughout Europe; but on its cultural side internationalism flourished greatly. In Paris and Vienna, in Geneva and in Berlin, in St. Petersburg and at The Hague, and, in a smaller degree, in London, Edinburgh, Florence, Turin, Venice, Madrid and Lisbon, educated persons read the same books, thought the same thoughts, and, very largely, used the same language. Frederick II of Prussia knew French better than he knew German. Gibbon was for some time in doubt as to whether he should write his great *History* in French or in English. Never since the thirteenth century had the upper classes of all lands presented the appearance of so uniform a civilisation. Except in England, Holland, Switzerland, and the younger England across the Atlantic, there was hardly a trace of democracy or nationality, the twin forces which, between them, moulded the history of

the nineteenth century. In government the fashion of the day was Benevolent Despotism. This, undoubtedly, was an immense and most salutary advance upon the old view that the subjects existed for the pleasure of their rulers. The new belief was the exact converse of this—rulers now existed for the sake of their subjects. Nevertheless, rulers were despots, in whom all political wisdom and power were deemed to reside. People might be, and sometimes were, well governed; but self-governed they never were.

Another feature of the period is colonial expansion. The early efforts of Spain and Portugal to appropriate all the undiscovered territory of the world had failed. Spain itself declined; and the great American and East Indian heritage had to be fought for by Holland, France, and England. Holland was content with building up an empire in the East, and making safe the journey thither by the colonisation of South Africa. The task of dividing between them the almost limitless territory of North America fell to the lot of England and France. Before the French Revolution broke out, and after forty years of almost incessant warfare, the question had been finally decided—America was to be English. In India, too, England had ousted her rivals, France, Portugal, and Holland, and had made herself the dominant Power.

Before the close of the century Australia was discovered, and claimed by England. And a few years later Cape Colony was purchased from the Dutch.

A tremendous change was taking place in civilisation itself as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Improved means of transport and transit and the invention of machinery were creating nothing short of a social revolution. Population was growing, and collecting into spots favourable for the new industries; while, in place of the small villages in which manufacturing took place on a small scale in the homes of the peasantry, great factories were being erected, and around them large towns.

A good general survey of the two centuries, from 1600 to 1789, will be found in two books, both belonging to the same series, Wakeman's *Ascendancy of France*, and Hassall's *Balance of Power*. The seventeenth century, and, in a slightly lesser degree, the eighteenth century too, were a period of French ascendancy. In the seventeenth century ascendancy was both military and intellectual. France turned out the best armies, and also most of the best books. But after the death of Louis XIV France as a military power rapidly declined; and the decline was converted into ruin as the result of the war against Frederick the Great in Europe, and against the English at sea and in the colonies.

Yet even then France retained, and, if anything, increased, her intellectual ascendancy. At the summit of his fame Voltaire was the uncrowned king of Europe.

In Voltaire's *Age of Louis XIV* we have the most famous of all French men of letters writing the history of the most famous of all French kings. The result is a brilliant work, describing vividly, though sententiously, the splendour of what was, in spite of all its tawdriness, a truly great epoch. We have a gorgeous tableau spread before our eyes, with Louis himself as the centre figure, and revolving about him the glittering galaxy of warriors, statesmen, and poets who had contrived to render his reign illustrious. Louis had inherited the fruits of the successful labour of the great men who had preceded him; and in order to understand the foundations of French greatness during his reign it is necessary to know something of at least three of his predecessors—Henri IV, Richelieu, and Mazarin. The first of this trio had solved the religious difficulty which was fast reducing France to chaos; and had he not been struck down in his prime by the assassin's hand, he, and his able minister Sully, would have restored prosperity, agricultural and financial, to the nation. His life has been well described by P. F. Willert (*Heroes of the Nations*). This is an interesting work, from which much pleasure and profit may

be derived. Richelieu and Mazarin built upon a powerful central government, vested in an autocratic king, and, by judicious wars and alliances, taught Europe to realise that France was now the most powerful of nations. There exists a brilliantly written *Life of Richelieu* by an American scholar, J. B. Perkins (Heroes of the Nations). Mazarin is a much less interesting figure than Richelieu; and he gets, perhaps, the biography which he deserves in Mr. Arthur Hassall's *Life of Mazarin* (Foreign Statesmen Series). For French history in the eighteenth century, far and away the best book in English is J. M. Perkins's *France under Louis XV.* It is a book written with deep knowledge and with real understanding. No one after reading it would find himself in the dark as to the deeper causes of the French Revolution. France is fortunate in that the life-story of the great men who heralded, and to some extent made the Revolution, has been told with incomparable knowledge, insight, and charm, by one of the greatest literary men of our age, Lord Morley. He has given us lengthy essays on Turgot, Condorcet, and Robespierre, two volumes on Rousseau, two on Diderot, and one on Voltaire. He who would understand the mind, not only of France, but of cultured Europe in the last days of the *Ancien Régime*, should read every word of these. Nor need he grudge the time so

occupied; for whether we judge them as history, or as pure literature, they are equally entitled to a place in the front rank.

From France we turn to the Empire, now entering upon the last and least glorious period of its existence. We should begin with a study of the Thirty Years' War, that hideous scourge which wrought devastation over the greater part of Germany, and in which all the nations of the West were involved. The story has been succinctly told by S. R. Gardiner in his *Thirty Years' War* (Epochs of Modern History), a little work which makes no claim to literary merit, but is a useful summary of events. The great German poet Schiller wrote a *History of the Thirty Years' War*, which makes good reading, and is not without considerable historical value. The following chapters in Volume IV of the *Cambridge Modern History* are very useful: Ward's "Outbreak of the Thirty Years' War" and "The Peace of Westphalia"; Reddaway's "The Scandinavian North"; Moritz Brosch's "Papal Policy"; and Egerton's "Transference of Colonial Power." One of the best books on the period is Marie Hay's *Winter Queen*, a history written in the form of romance. It is an altogether delightful book, describing graphically the life and adventures of James I of England's unhappy daughter Elizabeth, who married the Elector Palatine of the Rhine, was for a brief

spell sovereign at Heidelberg and Prague, and ended her days in loneliness and sorrow in England. The remainder of the history of the Empire may be read in Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, and in Bright's short biographies of Maria Theresa and Joseph II.

As the Empire declined, two great States, which had formed part of it—Austria and Prussia—emerged, and soon became leading European Powers. The Hapsburg rulers of Austria had practically become hereditary Emperors; but as time went on, the real power of an Archduke of Austria and a King of Hungary appealed to them far more strongly than did the now unsubstantial dignity of head of the Empire. So far as Austria has a history anterior to the French Revolution it is told by Bryce, and in three solid volumes of Coxe's *House of Austria*.

At the opening of the seventeenth century Prussia was only a small province of the Empire, governed by the Hohenzollern rulers of Brandenburg. It was not until more than a hundred years later that her ruler acquired the title of King; and not until the reign of Frederick the Great (1740) that she took rank with other great States. The story of the rise and growth of Prussia is full of interest. There is no finer example in history of absolute devotion, on the part of subjects and rulers alike, to the welfare of their country. The best single book on the

subject, in English, is Grant Robertson and Marriott's *Evolution of Prussia*. This traces the history of the country from the far-off days when the Hohenzollern family were still wealthy burghers of Nuremberg down to the outbreak of war in 1914. The book is written with charm and style, abounding in epigram and shrewd criticism. It is based upon a thorough knowledge of the subject, and although written in the early part of the recent war, there are no indications that the writers' judgment has been warped by anti-German prejudice. For Frederick the Great we have Macaulay's brilliant essay. This is sparkling and amusing, and gives the main facts of the first part of his career. Macaulay generally indulges in exaggeration, and his portrait, in this essay, of King Frederick William is a grotesque caricature of a man who, while he possessed many absurd traits, was nevertheless a very great ruler. Few readers now ever turn to Carlyle's monumental *Frederick the Great*. It is in eight massive volumes, and only covers the history of the hero king down to the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Of the equally important twenty remaining years of the reign it has nothing to say. The book exhibits all the glaring defects of Carlyle as an historian, with an unusually small proportion of his merits. Here is hero-worship run to seed; and a love of minute and unimportant details which repels even the most

omnivorous reader. And yet Carlyle's pen had not altogether lost its cunning. Many of the character sketches, and all the descriptions of great battles, are masterpieces of literature. Here and there we come across one of those pregnant sentences, for which Carlyle is so justly famous, which, like a flash of lightning, light up a character or an event. A much more useful book, however, for the general reader is Mr. Norwood Young's *Frederick the Great*. There is also an excellent *Life* by W. F. Reddaway (Heroes of the Nations). In the sixth volume of the *Cambridge Modern History* the following chapters may be recommended—C. T. Atkinson's "War of Austrian Succession" and Emile Daniel's "Seven Years' War" and "Frederick the Great and his Successors." A flood of light is thrown upon the early home-life of Frederick in the intimate and delightful *Memoirs* of his sister, Wilhelmina of Baireuth.

The rise of Russia is full of interest, and in the persons of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great she produced two statesmen of a high order. A thoroughly good history of Russia we do not possess. The best is the translation of a French work by Rambaud. A recently written book is *Russia from the Varangians to the Bolsheviks*, written by Beazley, Forbes and Birkett, and edited by Ernest Barker. It is scholarly, but dull. A much more interesting

work is *Slavonic Europe*, by Nisbet Bain, in which the history of both Russia and Poland, from 1447 to 1796, is related. Of Polish history there is an excellent sketch by Mr. Alison Phillips in the Home University Library.

Other countries will be found quite adequately dealt with in the general books already discussed. A few other works might, perhaps, be mentioned with advantage. For the Scandinavian lands we have a fair sketch in *Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, and Finland*, by Jón Stefansson; and in Nisbet Bain's *Scandinavia*. There is a most interesting *Life of Gustavus Adolphus*, by C. R. L. Fletcher, and of Charles XII, by Nisbet Bain (*Heroes of the Nations*). An excellent *History of Holland*, by Mr. G. Edmundson, appeared recently. The best account of Spain in the period of its decline is Martin Hume's *Spain, its Greatness and Decay*.

We now turn to England; and here it is truly difficult to proceed, so ample are the materials from which a selection has to be made. The great topic of the seventeenth century is the struggle between Crown and Parliament, and around that our reading must revolve. In the eighteenth century there are several topics of equal importance—the working out of the Cabinet system, the Industrial Revolution, colonial expansion, and the Methodist Revival. Let us deal with each in turn.

The seventeenth century produced two histo-

rians whose works are alive to-day—Clarendon and Burnet. The former's *History of the Rebellion* and the latter's *History of My Own Time* are both classics and well deserve to be read, at least in parts. Clarendon took an active and prominent share in all the great events between the Petition of Right and the execution of Charles I. He then accompanied Charles II into exile, returned with him at the Restoration, and was his chief minister again until sent into banishment. His book is too long (six volumes, with a supplementary *Life*), and often tedious. But the style is dignified and noble, and the portraits of all the principal men of the time are drawn with consummate skill. No man has ever written a fairer and more weighty apology for the early Stuarts. Burnet was a noisy, energetic, latitudinarian bishop, who served William and Mary with conspicuous loyalty and devotion. He was an eye-witness of most of what he relates, and had ample opportunities of getting to know the political secrets of the day. In quality of style and mind he is markedly inferior to Clarendon.

The fullest account of the first part of the seventeenth century will be found in the fourteen volumes in which S. R. Gardiner narrates the history of England, from 1603 to 1648. Its dullness and its portentous length make it a book which few have read in the past, and which still fewer will read in the future. Fortunately

we may, without harm, leave it unread, and turn either to the more agreeable work by Ranke, or to Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's brilliant volume, *England under the Stuarts*. It would be difficult to praise this latter too highly; it is a model of what historical composition ought to be.

But of course the book which everybody reads, and which everyone will continue to read until the English language is itself forgotten, is Macaulay's *History of England*, a work which, after some magnificent introductory chapters, proceeds to deal in detail with the reign of William and Mary. As it stands, it is only a fragment of the great work which Macaulay had planned to write, but did not live to finish; nevertheless there is nothing fragmentary about it: it is a biography, on a colossal scale, of William Prince of Orange. It would be easy, but unconvincing, to assert that Macaulay is the greatest of all the world's historians; it is safer, and more reasonable, to say that he is excelled by none. No one ever surpassed Macaulay in the power of making the past live. His knowledge was boundless; and he knew how to employ it all to illustrate his themes. But the proportion is always perfect. There is no ostentatious parade of learning, for Macaulay was always the master, and not the slave, of his own erudition. He is at his best in lengthy descriptive pieces, such as his description of the state of England in 1685, in his account

of the trial of the Seven Bishops, of the landing and arrival in London of William of Orange, of the battle of the Boyne, and of the massacre of Glencoe. He also solves, with unerring skill, difficult and abstruse constitutional problems; and we have the high authority of Maitland for saying that his solutions are always correct. Macaulay is least satisfactory when analysing character. For him all men were either black or white. He knows nothing of those delicate half-shades an appreciation of which marks the true master of human motive. For men whom he hated or despised—Cranmer, Laud, Charles II, Marlborough—he had no good thing to say; while for his own favourites, extenuating circumstances are found to palliate all their faults. Neither could he see any good in the Tory Party. He was a Whig of the Whigs; and his *History* is, in a sense, a great Whig epic. But Macaulay's bias is so transparent that no one is ever deluded by it. It can always be duly discounted, so that no harm is done. Very different is it from the more subtle and pernicious partiality of the historians who, while appearing ostentatiously to hold the scales even, are all the time suppressing or distorting facts, and slipping in sly insinuations. Like Froude, Macaulay was a great patriot. He was proud of England's wealth, of her power, and, above all, of her liberty and justice. In addition to the *History*, he has left

us several essays dealing with the seventeenth century, mainly those on "Milton," "Hampden," "Hallam," "Dramatists of the Restoration," and "Dryden."

In the Puritan ideal the seventeenth century bequeathed to posterity something of priceless and abiding value. It was a type of civilisation different from others that had gone before, and from those which came after, but one which has now entered into the very texture of our thought. It should, therefore, be carefully studied, and the gold in it distinguished from the dross. Trevelyan's treatment of Puritanism, in the book already mentioned, is fair and sympathetic. On the religious side we study it best in Milton's poetry and in Bunyan's prose. Milton's prose writings are so disfigured by the virulent abuse characteristic of the polemics of the day that they make somewhat painful reading, despite the frequent occurrence of passages of the noblest and most gorgeous rhetoric. Far better is it to study the movement on its political side in the various excellent biographies of Oliver Cromwell which we possess. Whatever view we may take of Cromwell's character, no competent judge denies now that he is the greatest ruler this country has had since King Alfred. His *Letters and Speeches*, edited by Carlyle, are essential for a right understanding of the man himself. In Carlyle's day it was still the fashion

among the historians to belittle Cromwell, and to depict him as a canting hypocrite. Macaulay, in his essay on Milton, struck a vigorous blow at this pestiferous and mendacious legend; but it was Carlyle who performed, once and for all, the great act of vindication. On the whole, perhaps, the best biography of Cromwell is that of Professor Firth (*Heroes of the Nations*). Firth is the greatest master of seventeenth-century history among living scholars; and in this volume we have the best fruits of his learning in a sympathetic and fully appreciative study of the great Protector. A more critical estimate is that of Lord Morley. His *Oliver Cromwell* is a great book, full of political wisdom and balanced judgment. Morley is a staunch Parliamentarian; and while admitting to the full Cromwell's claim to unsullied honesty and unsurpassed ability, he can never quite forgive him his rude and unceremonious treatment of the House of Commons. There are two books by Gardiner—*Oliver Cromwell* and *Cromwell's Place in History*. Both are eulogistic, and very valuable works, especially the second of the two. In Gardiner's opinion Cromwell and Shakespeare are the two typical Englishmen of all time. Frederic Harrison, with his usual consummate skill in the art of writing short biographies, has contributed a well-nigh perfect little volume on Cromwell to the Twelve English Statesmen series.

For the political philosophy of the century, by far the best book is J. N. Figgis's *Divine Right of Kings*. There are many shrewd comments on the men and events of the time also in Leslie Stephen's *Hobbes* (English Men of Letters).

Of contemporary literature which, without being historical in purpose, is yet invaluable to the student of the century, mention has already been made of Milton and Bunyan. Another most useful, and most entertaining work, is the famous *Diary* of Samuel Pepys. The less known, and less sparkling, *Diary* of John Evelyn is another well worth reading. In Butler's *Hudibras* the Puritans are held up to ridicule, with a wit which, if often coarse, is often, too, of a high order. One modern novel deserves to be mentioned—Shorthouse's immortal *John Inglesant*. Such of Scott's novels as deal with England are of less value to the historian than those which deal with Scotland.

Proceeding to the eighteenth century, we are fortunate in finding that where Macaulay lays down the pen, another great historian—W. E. H. Lecky—takes it up. The seven volumes of his *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* tell our island story from the accession of Queen Anne down to the Napoleonic Wars. It is an altogether admirable book, learned, sagacious, and interesting. His style, though much inferior

in brilliancy to that of Froude or Macaulay, is still that of a very great writer. For English political history, literature, religion, and all social matters, the book stands without a rival. On a much smaller scale is Principal Grant Robertson's single volume, *England under the Hanoverians*. It is an admirable survey of the eighteenth century, and is particularly good in its dealing with foreign and colonial affairs. Those of us who had the good fortune to read Modern History at Oxford in the years immediately preceding the War have few more precious memories than those of Mr. Robertson's eloquent and fascinating lectures on British foreign policy.

Men, if given the choice of living in any past age in the history of this country, would almost certainly choose either the reign of Elizabeth or the reign of Anne. Lecky deals at considerable length with Anne's reign; but well worth reading also are Herbert Paul's *Queen Anne* and Leslie Stephen's masterly lectures, *English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century*. It is, one hopes, supererogatory to impress upon anyone the importance of reading as much as possible of the works of the great eighteenth-century writers—Addison, Swift, Pope, Fielding, Sterne, Boswell, Richardson, Gray, Goldsmith, Hume, Burke, and many others. Nor should anyone leave Thackeray's *Henry Esmond* unread.

The names of three statesmen of the eighteenth

century stand out above all others, each of them supremely great in his own way. They are Walpole, the great restorer of tranquillity and chief architect of the modern Parliamentary State; William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, the great prophet of Imperialism; and Edmund Burke, greatest of all political philosophers since the days of Aristotle. Lord Morley's *Walpole* (Twelve English Statesmen) is perhaps the most perfect short biography in the English language. Every paragraph in it is packed with gems of political wisdom. In the same series there is an excellent biography of *Chatham*, by Frederic Harrison. For the years of his political novitiate we have Lord Rosebery's brilliant *Chatham: His Early Life and Connections*, a book of unfailing charm. There are two of Macaulay's essays which taken together cover the whole of the great statesman's life. In the second of them Macaulay is seen at his best. A full-dress biography, based upon all the most up-to-date research, is Mr. Basil Williams's *Life of William Pitt*. Of Burke there is a short *Life* by Morley. It is enough to say of this masterly little work that it is worthy to stand by the side of the same author's *Walpole*. Some, at least, of Burke's own writings should be read; for both in form and content they are classics of the first rank. If a selection were to be made, one would perhaps recommend the historian to

read the following: "Thoughts on the Present Discontents," "Reflections on the French Revolution" and "Letters on a Regicide Peace"; and the three great speeches, on "Conciliation with the Colonies," "American Taxation" and "The Nabob of Arcot's Debts."

Four great soldiers and empire-builders and three great sailors are of sufficient interest to merit individual treatment—Marlborough, Wolfe, Clive, Warren Hastings, Cook, Dampier, and Rodney. The best biography of the first Duke of Marlborough is that by Mr. Stuart Reid. Of Wolfe there is an interesting little *Life* by A. G. Bradley. Macaulay has described the careers of Clive and Warren Hastings in two of his best known and brilliant essays. Subsequent research has proved him to be unfair to Hastings in many particulars, and his account must, therefore, be read with caution. There is a *Life* of Clive by Sir Charles Wilson, of Warren Hastings by Sir Alfred Lyall, of Captain Cook by Sir Walter Besant, of Dampier by Clark Russell, and of Rodney by David Hannay.

The best books on English foreign policy, after the reign of Elizabeth, is Seeley's *Growth of British Policy*, a most able and penetrating study. The main facts and principles of our colonial policy will be found in Professor Egerton's *British Colonial Policy*. Parkman's *Montcalm*

and Wolfe describes, with the skill of a true master, the duel between England and France in North America. An excellent account of the foundation, and of the growth, of our Indian Empire will be found in Alfred Lyall's *British Dominion in India*. For the Industrial Revolution the reader, if he wishes something more than the very full treatment of the subject in Lecky, may read the relevant portion of Cunningham's *Growth of British Industry and Commerce* and Arnold Toynbee's *Industrial Revolution*. Lecky's treatment of the Methodist Revival (a movement which vindicates the century against the oft-repeated charge of being altogether prosaic and materialistic) is full and sympathetic. Still, those who can afford the time would be well advised to dip into John Wesley's delightful *Journal*, a work which may be conveniently read in Mr. Augustine Birrell's abridged edition.

There only remains to mention books dealing with the revolt of the American Colonies, and the founding of the United States. The study of this momentous event might well be begun with a perusal of Lord Acton's masterly lecture, *The American Revolution*. This might be followed by T. C. Smith's volume, in the Home University Library, *Wars between England and America*. A very good book, too, is Edward Channing's *United States of America*. A whole volume of

the *Cambridge Modern History* is devoted to the United States. There is a fine lecture on George Washington in Frederic Harrison's *American Addresses*, and good biographies of him by Mr. Woodrow Wilson and Thayer.

VII The French Revolution and Napoleon

WHEN we come to the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, we enter again upon one of those periods which give unity to European affairs. During those stormy days from 1789 to 1815 it is the same names, of men and of events, that are upon the lips of all people, from Moscow to Lisbon, and from Dantzic to Palermo—Napoleon, Pitt, Danton, Suvaroff, Metternich, Wellington, Ney, Stein, Blücher, Nelson, Talleyrand, the Bastille, Marengo, Trafalgar, Austerlitz, Jena, Aboukir, Wagram, Leipzig, Waterloo. The full force of the Revolution was felt in France, where everything was transformed; but even those countries which, ostensibly, went back in 1815 to eighteenth-century ways, could never be quite the same as if it had not been. Indeed, the whole outlook of Europe was changed. This, of course, would not have been so if Napoleon's armies had not marched from one end of Europe to the other, carrying with them the explosive ideas of '89, breaking in pieces institutions hallowed by age, giving a higher standard of efficiency, and awaking in the hearts of people

whose political instincts had hitherto been dormant a self-conscious and an intense nationalism, which no pressure could ever afterwards subdue. France had proclaimed, with clarion notes, the burning words of Rousseau—"Man was born free, and everywhere he is in chains." Napoleon soon taught rulers and subjects alike that there was nothing sacred, or inviolate, about Romanoffs, or Hapsburgs, or Hohenzollerns. Italy was taught to look forward to her own political unity and autonomy. Poles, deprived of their independence, and living under the government of Prussia, Russia, and Austria, were encouraged to aspire once again to national freedom. The inhabitants of Prussia, Saxony, Baden, and Bavaria came to feel that they were all Germans, and had a common interest in the well-being of Germany.

For a study of the period 1789 to 1815 as a whole the best summary is Professor Holland Rose's *Revolutionary and Napoleonic Era*. It is written by a thorough master of the subject and one who has the ability to condense his learning in a lucid and attractive manner. Another good book is Mr. Morse Stephen's *Revolutionary Europe*.

Of the French Revolution itself, up to the appearance of Napoleon, there are very good, and some excellent, works. Among modern ones, containing the results of most recent

research, the best is that of Louis Madelin, which, happily, has found an English translator. In this single volume will be found practically all that is worth knowing about the Revolution in France itself. This book, although in accuracy it would comply with the requirements of the most exacting "scientific" historians, is written in a charming and attractive style. Among older books, the most famous in English is Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution*. This is a magnificent prose poem rather than a history in the strict sense of the word. But it is written in Carlyle's early manner, before his worship of the superman had entirely subverted his judgment. It abounds in descriptive passages which, for vividness, have never been surpassed; and it contains a gallery of portraits so graphically painted that one has to go back to Tacitus to find anything worthy of comparison with them. His account of the taking of the Bastille, of the massacre of the Swiss Guards, of the King's flight to Varennes, and his portraits of Mirabeau, Robespierre, and Danton, are among the finest things in the whole literature of history. But Carlyle's gorgeous clouds are often clouds without water; and we must, to understand the Revolution properly, descend from his rhapsodies to the cold and sober learning of Lord Acton's *Lectures on the French Revolution*, which is the best book on the Revolution ever written in English. It

is not, however, an easy book to read. The range of reading reflected in its pages is boundless; and it is so terse as to be sometimes obscure except to the reader who already has some knowledge of the subject and is, furthermore, very wide awake. Mr. Hilaire Belloc has written a brilliant and challenging essay on the Revolution (Home University Library) which no reader can fail to enjoy. Profound studies of the causes of the Revolution will be found in Taine's *Ancien Régime*, and in De Tocqueville's *Ancien Régime and the Revolution*. Both these works are French historical classics. They are works of men who were philosophers, keen students, and critics of the past, and great literary men.

The French Revolution produced many extremely interesting types of character, and a few great men who are deserving of individual attention. The greatest of all was Mirabeau, the versatile aristocrat who attempted to mediate between king and people; and who, if he had not died a premature death, might have succeeded in curbing the wilder forces of revolution, and guided France into constitutional channels. Macaulay has written a short, but pregnant, essay on him. There is also an admirable biography by P. F. Willert. Of the titanic Danton there are three good biographies. The best is that of Louis Madelin. The other two are by H. H. Beasley, and Hilaire Belloc. Mr. Belloc

has also written a *Life of Robespierre*; but this is less valuable than the penetrating and illuminating study of him by Lord Morley (*Critical Miscellanies*, Vol. I).

Books on Napoleon and his age, are to be numbered in hundreds. Unfortunately, some of the very best, such as Sorel's *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, Masson's *Napoléon Inconnu*, and Vandel's *L'Avènement de Bonaparte* and *Napoléon et Alexandre*, and Morvan's *Le Soldat Impérial*, have not been translated into English. The reader will do well to begin his study with Mr. H. A. L. Fisher's *Napoleon* (Home University Library), and to return again to this little book, after reading anything else as well. Nowhere else can so clear, accurate, and concise a bird's-eye view of the career of the great Emperor be found. It is an extremely brilliant work, one which cannot fail to rivet the attention of the reader who approaches the subject for the first time, and one in which the reader who has perused all the standard biographies of Napoleon is certain to come across much that is new and suggestive. Of the larger books, Fournier's *Napoleon I* is probably the best. It is an Austrian work of the highest possible authority and has been well rendered into English in a version to which Mr. Fisher supplies the foreword. It is for Napoleon as statesman that Fournier is peculiarly valuable. For campaigns and battles the best is Holland

Rose's *Life of Napoleon I*, a work which is of special interest for the English reader. Among French books which have been translated, three stand out above all others. The first is Thiers's *History of the Consulate and the Empire*. This is one of the greatest of all French historical works. Thiers had been dazzled by the glory of Napoleon, and the whole work is a magnificent pæan on that theme. The style is brilliant and picturesque; and as a master of dramatic art few writers have equalled Thiers. Some of the chapters, notably those describing the great disaster of 1812 in Russia, are among the imperishable glories of French prose. The next work is that of Taine, the continuation of his book on the Revolution which has already been discussed. It maintains the same high level of philosophic detachment, and is particularly valuable for its criticism of Napoleon's domestic policy, an aspect of the great Emperor which is apt to be forgotten amid the resounding noise of his military exploits. The last of the three is Lanfrey's *Napoleon*. The attitude of this writer is severely critical, if not hostile, and he should be read as an antidote to Thiers.

For various periods of Napoleon's career, particular topics and individual countries, the following books may be read with profit: Oscar Browning's *Napoleon, the First Phase*, gives a good account of the steps by which the obscure

Corsican rose to fame and power. Side by side with this we might place Lord Rosebery's *Napoleon, the Last Phase*. This gives an account of the last days at St. Helena, and the sowing of the seeds of the "Napoleonic Legend" which was to exercise so potent an influence upon the subsequent history of France. It is a singularly brilliant and charming work, and its study of Napoleon's temperament is perhaps the best ever made. Houssaye in his *1815* gives an excellent account of the mighty struggle which finally accomplished Napoleon's overthrow. The Peninsular War is, of course, of peculiar interest to English readers; and it has been described, on a large scale, by two English historians. The first is Napier, whose *History of the Peninsular War*, in six volumes, contains much excellent writing. His battle-pieces are particularly good. The book as a whole just falls short of being a classic. A less interesting, but more modern and scholarly, work is Sir Charles Oman's *Peninsular War*.

Holland Rose's *Napoleonic Studies*, Gooch's *Germany and the French Revolution*, Fisher's *Napoleonic Statesmanship*, and Mahan's *Sea Power and the French Revolution*, are all valuable works. Lady Blennerhassett is the author of a good *Life* of Talleyrand, and Seeley of a *Life* of Stein. Unfortunately there is no good biography of Metternich in English (the French study by

Mazade is excellent), but we are able to learn much about the arch-diplomatist of Europe in the general books, and in his own most entertaining and valuable, though far from trustworthy, *Memoirs*. For the German War of Liberation of 1813-1815 we have the first volume of Treitschke's great *History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century*, a work which has never been surpassed in vigour and brilliancy. For the political theory of the French Revolution, recourse must be had to the works by Lord Morley already mentioned on Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau and Robespierre. A brilliant and most interesting book, covering a much wider field, is Mr. Fisher's *Republican Tradition in Europe*. The underlying theory of Bonapartism has been expounded with unrivalled skill and penetration by the same author in a series of lectures entitled *Bonapartism*.

The literature of memoirs dealing with the Revolution and Napoleon is voluminous in the extreme; but much of it is of but slender value. The most interesting that are available in English are those of the following: The Duchesse d'Abrantès, Fouché, Bourrienne, Marbot, de Rémusat, Talleyrand, Ségur and Thibaudeau. Volumes VIII and IX of the *Cambridge Modern History* contain many admirable chapters dealing with the period; it is, however, only necessary to mention such of them as contain information which cannot so conveniently be found in the

books already dealt with. Such are Lodge's "European Powers and the Eastern Question"; Viollet's "French Law in the Age of the Revolution"; Gooch's "Europe and the French Revolution"; Guillard's "France and her Tributaries"; Fisher's "The Codes," and "The French Dependencies"; and Ward's two chapters on the "Congress of Vienna."

England during this period lost much of her insularity. Her retirement from the Seven Years' War, and her by no means chivalrous abandonment of her exhausted ally, Prussia, had alienated the sympathies of the Continental Powers. "Perfidious Albion" was a phrase already in men's minds if not on their lips. The consequences were seen and felt in the struggle with the revolted American Colonies, when England had to face the combined hostility of France and Spain, and was unable to procure an ally. From this position of despised loneliness the younger Pitt was rapidly rescuing her when the Revolutionary Wars broke out. The story of this period, and of the fortunes of England during the succeeding stormy, and often disastrous, years down to 1815, has been admirably told by Mr. G. M. Trevelyan in his recent work, *British History in the Nineteenth Century*. The record of the years of recovery between 1783 and 1792, and of the first part of the great war, is bound up with the history of William Pitt. His name stands out

as prominently on one side as does that of Napoleon upon the other. His life has been briefly told by Macaulay in one of the most perfect of his writings. On a slightly larger scale is Rosebery's *William Pitt* (Twelve English Statesmen), a brilliant and masterly study of the politics and personalities of the times. The standard biography is that by Holland Rose. This is in two volumes called, respectively, *Pitt and National Revival* and *Pitt and the Great War*. Another fascinating and indispensable book is Sir G. O. Trevelyan's *Early History of Charles James Fox*. A vigorous, and somewhat iconoclastic, account of many of the prominent political figures of the age will be found in J. W. Fortescue's *British Statesmen of the Great War*. Southey's *Life of Nelson* is a classic so well known as hardly to require mention. Other good biographies are Maxwell's *Life of Wellington*, Temperley's *George Canning*, Marriott's *George Canning*, and Hassall's *Castlereagh*. Mr. H. N. Brailsford's *Shelley, Godwin, and their Circle* (Home University Library) gives a delightful account of the revolutionary literature and thought of the period. Incidentally it contains one of the best studies of Shelley ever written.

THE nineteenth century, which we take to begin in 1815, necessarily opens with the resettlement of Europe; an attempt, for the most part, to get back to pre-Revolution political conditions. "Status quo" was the watchword of the Vienna Congress. But two latent forces had been quickened into life by the Napoleonic tyranny—Democracy and Nationality. Their forces, sooner or later, were destined to burst all the barriers within which the statesmen of 1815 thought to enclose them. Following upon the Treaty of Vienna, a short period of comparative stability and repose ensued; but soon the storm burst, and the forces let loose were to mould the policy of every European nation down to the outbreak of the greater war of 1914.

The history of Europe from 1815 to 1871 is the record of attempts on the part of various nations to destroy the Treaty of Vienna. A revolt of the Greeks, in 1821, led eventually to the formation of an independent kingdom of Greece. A revolt of the Belgians, in 1830, against the arrangement of 1815 whereby they

had been incorporated with Holland, led to the formation of the kingdom of Belgium, whose neutrality was guaranteed by the Great Powers. A revolt of the Spanish Colonies in South America led to the formation of the republics which we find there at the present day. The political restlessness of France, after finding vent in revolution in 1830 and again in 1848, finally led to the revival of the Napoleonic Empire in 1852, and to the embarking upon a policy of mischievous chauvinism, which led straight to the disasters of the Franco-Prussian War. The Holy Roman Empire had disappeared in 1806, and no attempt was made to resuscitate it. The Hapsburgs were now content to possess the more real power vested in them as Emperors of Austria and Kings of Hungary, while at the same time they exercised an influence equal to that of Prussia in the affairs of Germany. The great population of Germany, stirred to its depths by the War of Liberation and by the teaching of such men as Stein, Hardenburg, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Grimm, Fichte, Humboldt, Savigny, and Hegel, resented being reduced to political impotence by being cut up into thirty-nine States under the Diet in which Austria possessed the predominant influence. In like manner the Italians, inspired by the brief vision of possible national unity held before their eyes by Napoleon, resented the division of their country into ten States, of which Milan and

Venice were governed by Austria, and Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and Lucca by Hapsburg princes. Meantime the success of the Greeks had awakened national aspirations in other Balkan peoples living under the government of the Sultan. The Ottoman Empire was becoming the "Sick Man" of Europe, around whose bed Russia, France and England hung in anxious expectation. Russia, flushed by her success in the Napoleonic War, was entering upon a great period of expansion, pushing eagerly towards Constantinople, and across Asia towards the Wall of China and the northern hills of India.

After 1871 a new epoch opens. Germany and Italy were now strong and united nations. France, as a Republic, was rapidly recovering from the devastations and humiliation of 1870, and beginning to think seriously of her colonial interests. Russia was more concerned with the Far East than with Europe. It was only the smaller and unrecognised nations—Poles, Southern Slavs, Czechs, Irish—who were worrying much about political independence. Europe was beginning to look beyond its own frontiers. The period of World Politics and World Power was beginning. Germany, entering late into the competition for colonies, took an active part in the partitioning of Africa. France and Italy, determined not to be outdone, entered upon the same quest. Stagnant countries, such as China and Persia, offered a

fine field for commercial enterprise and peaceful penetration. Japan slowly began to deck herself with a veneer of Western civilisation, and to claim rank with the Great Powers. Economic pressure was becoming more acute, and the struggle for the possession of raw materials more desperate. This intensifying of national rivalries led to the competition in armaments, and to the division of Europe into two watchful camps. In this tense atmosphere it needed little to precipitate the world into war.

An admirable text-book covering the whole century is Mr. Alison Phillips's *Modern Europe*. It is packed with valuable information, presented in an interesting form. Another shorter, but good, work is Mr. J. A. R. Marriott's *Remaking of Modern Europe*. The last three volumes of the *Cambridge Modern History* are a veritable mine of knowledge bearing upon the period.

Until 1870 France remains the centre of the European State-system. All diplomatic roads lead to Paris. It was not until every thread of diplomacy had found its way into the hands of Bismarck that interest was transferred from the Quai d'Orsay to the Wilhelmstrasse. The best work on nineteenth-century French history available in English is Emile Bourgeois's *Modern France*. This covers the whole period with a considerable wealth of detail. It is learned, accurate, and fair, and, like most French books,

well-written. Another good book, written by a most able French scholar, is Hanotaux's *Contemporary France*. Having, by reading these works, laid a sound foundation, the reader can proceed to deal in greater detail with the various epochs into which the history of France in the last century naturally divides itself. (1) The Bourbon Restoration, to the Revolution of 1830. This period is one of recuperation. France had to recover the confidence of Europe; and, if possible, to establish a new and sound constitution. It is a dull period; and most readers will deem the general books already mentioned amply sufficient for its study. (2) The reign of Louis Philippe, to the Revolution of 1848. The Revolution of 1830, so far as France herself was concerned, was a somewhat prosaic affair, and it resulted in the establishment of one of the most prosaic of monarchs upon the throne. Louis Philippe was the very incarnation of middle-class respectability—an excellent type of ruler, who would have made England or Holland happy, but who assorted badly with the more mercurial temperament of the subjects he was called upon to govern. When he was deposed in 1848 it was, as a great Frenchman remarked, because "France was bored." Here, again, Bourgeois's book contains all that one need know. (3) The Second Empire. It is in studying the years 1848–1871 that the English reader is at the greatest disadvantage.

as most of the great French histories of the period have not been translated, *e.g.*, Pierre de la Gorce's *Histoire de la Seconde République* and *Histoire du Seconde Empire*, and Emile Ollivier's *L'Empire Libéral*. But Bourgeois's *Modern France* is fairly full; and there are very good chapters in the *Cambridge Modern History*. A recent book, about which very mixed opinions are held, is Mr. Guedalla's *Second Empire*. In spite of its superficial air of levity it is unquestionably a valuable study, based upon a thorough mastery of the period. But the author has a passion for the trivial and a horror of the things that really count. The entire work is written in a style which, despite its cleverness, is so full of exasperating mannerisms that it is really doubtful whether the pleasure or the pain of reading it is the greater. (4) The Franco-Prussian War. This war belongs as much to the history of Germany as it does to that of France. In the former country it created an Empire, while in the latter it destroyed one. The mass of material for its study is enormous, and even now all the secret papers have not been disclosed. Moreover, the Empress Eugénie has died in our midst, preserving to the end the silence she had determined to keep, and taking with her to the grave secrets of which she was the sole living custodian. English sympathy was with Germany. Both countries were equally bent upon war, and

only a convenient occasion was sought. By his markedly superior statesmanship Bismarck succeeded in placing France clearly in the wrong. What was wanting was supplied by the bellicose populations of Paris and Berlin, and by the Jingo Press of the two nations. Lord Acton has an excellent paper on the causes of the war in his *Essays and Studies*. The best up-to-date account of the war will be found in Holland Rose's *Development of the European Nations*, a work which will be found invaluable for the whole history of Europe after 1870. Lord Newton's *Life of Lord Lyons* throws a flash of light upon the last years of the Empire. (5) The Third Republic. A fascinating book dealing with the making of peace, and the first years of the Republic, is ex-President Paul Deschanel's *Life of Gambetta*. Duclaux's *Victor Hugo*, Darmesteter's *Ernest Renan*, and Taine's *Life and Letters* are valuable for history as well as for literature and culture.

From France to Germany the transition is easy; for throughout the nineteenth century the history of the two countries is inextricably intertwined. The Treaty of Vienna had given the Rhineland to Prussia; and henceforward the two nations, with no buffer State to keep them apart, snarled at one another like angry dogs. "The Watch on the Rhine" became the most popular of German patriotic songs. The history of Germany, from 1815 to 1871, is the record of the

great movement for national inspiration. The stubborn enemy of this movement was France, who, for selfish reasons, desired a weak and divided neighbour across the Rhine. The hero of the struggle, the man whose plan was adopted, and who steered his country through difficulties which had seemed to be insuperable, was Bismarck, whose giant figure dominates the whole century.

The best summary of the period will be found in Grant Robertson and Marriott's *Evolution of Prussia*. A larger work, much more detailed, but scarcely so illuminating, and decidedly less interesting, is A. W. Ward's *Modern Germany*. Most of the great foreign works on the period have not been translated; but that is, fortunately, not the case with Treitschke's *Germany in the Nineteenth Century*. The seven massive volumes of the "German Macaulay" are now accessible to English readers. Treitschke is, unquestionably, one of the world's greatest historians, immensely learned, and a master of a richly coloured and vigorous style. His patriotism is exuberant, and he can see little good in France or in "perfidious Albion." Unfortunately he died when his *History* had only reached the year 1848. Books on Bismarck abound. The best English work is Grant Robertson's *Bismarck*. It is a study of his policy, rather than a biography in the ordinary sense. Mr. Robertson is universally known as the

highest English authority on the subject ; and here he gives us of his very best. No more fascinating, illuminating, and masterly contribution to the history of the last century has ever been written. A useful biography, of a more personal character, is Mr. J. W. Headlam's *Bismarck*. An intensely interesting and invaluable work which all should read is Bismarck's own *Reflections and Reminiscences*, together with the recently published supplementary volume. A side of the Iron Chancellor the existence of which few would guess is revealed in the charming *Bismarck Love Letters*, written to his wife over a period of fifty years. The many volumes by Busch dealing with Bismarck are garrulous, but often interesting.

The last of the three countries which re-acted so constantly upon one another throughout the century is Italy. Here, again, it is the problem of nationality that occupies the whole picture from 1815 to 1871, beginning with the conspiracies of the Carbonari, and passing through the lofty teaching of Mazzini, the theocratic plan of Gioberti, the dashing knight-errantry of Garibaldi, the consummate craft of Cavour, and the quiet self-assertion of Victor Emmanuel, to the wresting of Rome from the Pope. The Garibaldian episodes form the only truly romantic chapters in modern affairs. A careful study of Cavour's work is, in itself, an education in liberal statesmanship.

The best short account of the Risorgimento will

be found in the Countess Martinengo Cesaresco's *Liberation of Italy*, a book which tells the whole story in simple and glowing words. A larger work, which is the standard English book on the subject, is Mr. Bolton King's *History of Italian Unity*. The same author has also written a very good biography of Mazzini. For Garibaldi we have Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's three works—*Garibaldi and the Roman Republic*, *Garibaldi and the Thousand*, and *Garibaldi and the Unification of Italy*. The three are safely established among the world's greatest books of history. Of Cavour there is an excellent short sketch by Cesaresco. The standard work is Mr. W. R. Thayer's *Life of Cavour*.

Concerning the rest of Europe sufficient information will be found in the books already noticed. It remains only to deal with Great Britain, America, and Japan.

As a warning of what to imitate, and what to avoid, the history of Japan in recent years is full of instruction. There is a good book on the subject by Porter, and another by Brinkley.

American history in the nineteenth century is the record of a phenomenal material development. Its most dramatic episode is the Civil War. This would be worth studying if only because of the transcendent grandeur of the character of Abraham Lincoln. Channing's *United States of America* will be found useful. Lord Bryce's *American Commonwealth* has long been

a political classic. Lord Charnwood has written an excellent study of Lincoln; and Mr. Drinkwater, in his play, has given us a sympathetic and faithful interpretation.

There exist many good books dealing with the history of Great Britain in the nineteenth century. One might begin with Trevelyan's intensely interesting *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, and then proceed to the longer works. Spencer Walpole's six-volume *History of England* tells the story in a manner pleasant and easy, without being profound. Another most readable work, in seven volumes, is Justin M'Carthy's *History of Our Own Times*. This is, perhaps, good journalism rather than history; but it has considerable value. Mr. Herbert Paul's *History of England* is a brilliant account of the same period, particularly useful for its account of literature and social matters. Kinglake's *History of the Invasion of the Crimea* deserves to be better known than it is.

England in the nineteenth century can very advantageously be studied in the large number of excellent biographies of prominent people of the time which we possess. Trevelyan has written a good *Life* of Lord Grey. Of Sir Robert Peel there are two interesting little biographies, the one by Justin M'Carthy, and the other by Mr. J. R. Thursfield. Trevelyan's *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay* is second only to Boswell's *Johnson* as

biography, and is quite invaluable for the history of the first half of the century. Morley's *Cobden* is the best account we possess of the Free Trade movement. The same author's *Life of Gladstone* is one of the half-dozen best biographies in the language. In three massive volumes the life of the greatest of the Victorian statesmen is told by one who was supremely great himself as scholar and man of letters, and who was himself Gladstone's active lieutenant during important years, and for a considerable period the recipient of all his confidences. A useful work, but of much less value, is Money Penny and Buckle's *Life of Disraeli*. This is in six volumes; but there is a brilliant study of the great Tory statesman by J. A. Froude. Another excellent biography of one of the noblest men of the age is Trevelyan's *Life of John Bright*. Mr. Winston Churchill's biography of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill, is a brilliant book, full of interesting political matter. Lady Gwendoline Cecil's *Life of Lord Salisbury* is a fine and sympathetic account of a truly great man. One must not forget Mr. Lytton Strachey's charming and masterly *Queen Victoria*, a book which, beneath its dazzling clothing, contains a body of solid criticism.

Memoirs, diaries, and collections of essays, all more or less good, might be named in scores. The best-known are the *Creevey Papers*, the *Greville Memoirs* and Queen Victoria's *Letters*.

For what the Germans call *Kulturgeschichte* (culture-history) there are two outstanding works. The first is Morley's *Reminiscences*; and the other Frederic Harrison's *Autobiographic Memoirs*. Morley was born in 1838 and Harrison in 1831. Their memories, therefore, go back to the long-distant days when Victoria ascended the throne; and both have known all the people best worth knowing in politics, literature, science and art during the last sixty years.

It is only possible to mention barely the leading books which deal with the constitutional development of England and the political thought. The best are: Dicey's *Law of the Constitution*, Anson's *Law and Custom of the Constitution*, Bagehot's *English Constitution*, Jenks's *Government of the British Empire*, Pollard's *Evolution of Parliament*, Leslie Stephen's *Utilitarians* and Barker's *Political Thought from Spencer to To-day*. Lord Bryce's *Modern Democracies* omits England, and deals with France, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, South Africa and the United States.

For the English Colonies in the nineteenth century: Egerton's *Colonial Policy*, Lyall's *British Dominion in India*, Johnston's *Opening Up of Africa*, Jenks's *Australia* and Bourinot's *Canada*, are all good.

At the end of the long quest we can turn back to the books with which we began, and now read

them with infinitely greater profit. An undue pessimism may be corrected by a perusal of Bury's *Progress* and Bryce's *World History*, while any inclination towards an unfounded optimism will soon be dispelled by reading Dean Inge's Romanes Lecture, *The Idea of Progress*.

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